

# IRELAND TO-DAY

SOCIAL      •      ECONOMIC      •      NATIONAL      •      CULTURAL

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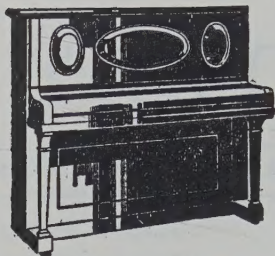
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## EDITORIAL

THE merely national antipathies of the good old days which resulted in war between nation and nation would seem to be giving place to the massing of the nations of the world for a conflict between two ideologies. Despair is settling on many peoples who feel impelled into a camp they detest to save themselves from absorption into another which fills them with even greater fear and loathing. But is there no middle way? The obvious answer is "no," but the centres of turbulence are the nations seeking outlets, seeking colonies, seeking raw materials and those with restrictive land frontiers. These are, essentially, the have-nots, and their disruptive progress is along the road taken by the older imperialisms. It is the resistance encountered that largely constitutes the difference. Is it not possible that the disintegration of the older empires and the division of the spoils would go far to simplify the world-struggle to-day and prevent its becoming a clash of philosophies and the cerements of the old order and tradition?

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The old order and tradition have suffered in the past from their identity with the forces of reaction and the triumph of imperialism. These are surely not of the essence of the old order or it would then merit extinction. Where is the focal point of the struggle for survival? France is commonly held to be the last repository of European civilization. With her disintegration that heritage goes, and with it the whole Christian philosophy that European culture connotes. Then might the deification of states supervene cloaking that very exploitation in the interests of the few, which so many unheeded encyclicals have deplored.

But if the heritage we spoke of can be retained, does it not follow that there is a third state and that we need not be precipitated towards the twin destructions that are said to face the world?

●

This pagan world sublimates a great deal of its innate theism into its political philosophies. It may be that simplicity and faith can see deeper than they, and that the situation as commonly accepted, and referred to in our opening lines, is a mere ugly phantasm terrifying this tossing and nightmarish world.

In this connection there seems a crumb of hope in the fact that most of the island or pen-insular people of the Northern zone, people without land frontiers or with their backs to the uninhabited polar regions, are out of the welter of things. It may then be that there is a third state which will provide the vital continuity between the old and the new, and so save us from the now threatening collapse between the two. If each of these nations—say, France, U.S.A., England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Ireland—were to guard the treasury of European culture, renounce ill-gotten possessions and liberate the exploited—as to some extent the first two have shown their willingness to do—there might be hope for a purified and more glorious civilization and even for our participation in the building of it.

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It is when we contemplate the terrific issues at stake in the world that we see how remote we are from it all. Practically the only unfree country in Europe, and dubbed "Free" as added insult, our participation in any movement among nations, cultural, economic, military is denied us by the over-riding negation of our existence. We could contribute much, for, once free, we would not be long putting out house in order. But to perpetuate the pretence that we are free and to treat with the only Power that opposes our freedom as though in perfect amity, will get us nowhere or at any rate—to enliven our tediousness with a bull—will not get us there fast enough.

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In wishing our readers a happy Christmas and an auspicious opening to their new year, we cannot forgo the expression of the hope that the authorities North and South will exercise their prerogative of leniency towards the many political prisoners held. In the North, hope is less bright because the men were processed by the ordinary law and because the aims of the prisoners run directly counter to those of the Northern Government. But in the South, the aims of the prisoners are identical with the declared objective of the Government, whose responsibility for the inculcation of their ideas and ideals, as is often stressed by the Government's political opponents, they cannot wholly disown. With the much more critical state of world affairs and their increasing repercussion within our shores, it is possible that a new orientation may be given to political thought here, a new outlet found for hitherto scattered or misdirected



energies and the basis of a new unity laid, which would hold together those with the greatest denominator of common interest in the face of destructive combinations.

●

Rumour is again busy with the fate of this country. How such a fate can be paper-controlled remains to be seen. Other countries afford daily evidence that the dynamism of a people, and their upward trend in numbers, self-reliance and self-sufficiency count more in the moulding of the future than paper agreements that are full of delimiting compromises. Weight is lent to such rumours by the somewhat peevish official reception which is accorded to any public discussion of the points at issue, a recent case being the question of partition, which surely it is not only the right but the duty of every Irishman to keep constantly before the public mind. Few would seek to embarrass negotiations which might be in progress, but with secret diplomacy and the accomplished fact the order of the day, no blame can be attached, but on the contrary all credit be given; to those who pause from the easy victories of industrial progress to the arduous task of our fundamental problems. The Irish Correspondent of the *Sunday Times* does not rule out the forcible occupation of the six of the nine Ulster counties which are directly under English control, but, however, that may be, the restoration of the fourth of our green fields should be the subject of an irredentist slogan in our schools.

●

Added weight is lent to rumour by the delay in the appearance of the promised Constitution, which it is prophesied will be so purged of the affronts contained in the present version that it will be equally suitable for adoption if and when a thirty-two county Republic is re-declared or secured. Many other items such as particular aspects of industrial, transport and power developments, air agreements and interchanges on defence, as well as the foreshadowing by the London *Times* Special Correspondent of the scrapping of the border as an elementary necessity at a time of strained relations, and the general consensus of opinion that the Land Annuities question is dead and buried—all fit in with the feeling that there is "something in the wind." Something more than sentiment, stern necessity for England, indicates as far as the other side is concerned that 1937 must see a "proper" settlement of what must still be called the Irish Question.

(continued on page 90)

## A FOREIGN COMMENTARY

FRANCE and the world have been shocked by the suicide of Roger Salengro. While the effect in France has undoubtedly been a wave of indignation against this man's detractors, who would stop at no calumny in their efforts to cast discredit on the personnel of the Government, yet the gain in moral support throughout the country will be fully offset by the immense loss which Salengro's death represents. In many respects he was irreplaceable. His energy, his quickness to reach decisions and to act on them, his whole-hearted devotion to the causes of the Government and of the workers of Lille, of which town he has long been the popular Mayor, will cause his loss to be felt in a hundred ways. True, he was heartily disliked by the big industrialists of Lille, outraged that a man in a responsible position should side with the workers in the recent strikes. He had not been forgiven by some for the part he played in revealing, to the whole of France, workers' conditions in the factories of Lille which seemed unbelievable in the twentieth century. Yet the great majority of his political opponents refused to be a party to the merciless campaign of calumny which brought him to his death. In a Chamber of over six hundred deputies only a bare hundred could be found who were ready to vote against his vindication. It is to be hoped that the French people will have the strength to answer Blum's appeal : not to forget and not to seek vengeance.

\* \* \*

*Candide* is typical of the right-wing press which succeeded in hounding Salengro to death by a series of unscrupulous and baseless accusations. If it be thought that solid proof is required for the launching of such a campaign, one should turn to *Candide* of October 22nd, there to find a long account of the underground and nefarious doings of the Communist Youth Movement in France. These sensational articles were accepted *without the slightest attempt at verification of the facts*. Yet they were preceded by an editorial note : " Everything that we are going to state here is rigorously exact ; we have the proofs in hands." There followed blood-curdling accounts of the doings of the notorious Communist agitators, Mervein, Tarcos, Xullpo, and others. And all this in the heart of unsuspecting Paris. It was most unfortunate that this article, announced as the first of four, should have remained alone in its glory, owing to the incapacity of the author, a young barber's assistant, to keep the joke to himself any longer. Having hoaxed the whole editorial



staff beyond his wildest dreams, and actually seen his first fantastic article in print, he decided to reveal to the French public what was meant by a certain section of the French press when they spoke of a thing being "rigorously exact." When it is observed that the above notorious communists were none other than Minerva, Castor and Pollux, it will be seen that to certain journals the *effect* of a "revelation" is much more important than any trifling question of truth. More and more upon the French Government is being borne in the fact that many of their opponents will stop at nothing.

\* \* \*

The nationalization of the armaments industry in France is doubly interesting in view of the fact that a Royal Commission has reported that such a course would not be expedient or indeed possible in Britain. This Commission, while deploring "the frivolous and cynical language which some of them (the armament makers) have used in their speeches at shareholders' meetings," yet holds that those who make profits from armaments are doing work of national importance. The frivolity of the speeches referred to would seem to be rivalled by the Commission's chief reasons for scouting the possibility of nationalization: (a) that *if* an international agreement for the limitation of armaments were reached, this would do away with many of the objections to the private trade in arms; (b) that non-producing countries might find it difficult to get arms "for the perfectly legitimate purposes of self-defence, the maintenance of order, and the fulfilment of international obligations" if there were no benevolent private firms ready to supply them, and (c) that there *are* no pure arms firms. This last is the only argument which deserves attention and it is the problem which is confronting the French Government to-day: the problem of disentangling the armament factories from the factories which produce engineering goods, chemicals and aircraft for ordinary purposes. By energetic action the French Government is solving this problem, by *forcing* a complete separation; and in certain cases it will not hesitate to nationalize cognate industries. The Royal Commission prefers to recommend that the profits of armament firms be "restricted" in peace time. A really radical solution. But then it will not be adopted.

\* \* \*

Germany and Italy have decided, somewhat prematurely perhaps, to recognise Franco's Government, not because he is a Fascist (we know he is not), not because he is going to set up

a Catholic Government (he says he will not), but because he "now has in his possession the majority of the country." Since this is the only reason advanced, it will be interesting to see the German and Italian decision reversed, if ever Franco should lose possession again of the majority of the country. If he succeeds in winning the first round of the battle he is going to be a very unhappy man, for he will be compelled, he says, to set up a military dictatorship to last for *five or six years*. Now we all know that this is a form of government which he heartily detests, and which will be forced upon him only by the influence of the handful of Russian agitators who started all the trouble. These Russians are immune to all sentiment of pity. And how unfair to continue their evil influence for five years after they have been cleaned up, or pacified. . . .

\* \* \*

Incidentally, we are asked to believe that Franco's rebellion was merely an attempt to anticipate a Communist one. This would appear to be a dangerous principle to admit. It would be very alarming if certain sections of a country were liable at any moment to resort to armed rebellion for fear some other section might. We can only console ourselves with the thought that this reason would probably not be considered a valid one for Communists.

The current sneers at Caballero's Government for withdrawing to Valencia are somewhat surprising in view of the fact that no such jibes were provoked during the War To End Wars, by the French Government's removal to Bordeaux or the Belgian's to Le Havre.

The situation in the Balearic Islands has been clearly summed up by a French weekly: "The valiant Moroccans have routed the Russians and won back from the Spaniards the Italian island of the Kings of Majorca."

\* \* \*

Daily it becomes clearer that Germany is impatient with negotiation as a means to change. The results of the latest departure from the Treaty of Versailles will be condemned by few, the method of departure, by many. The British assurance that "no vital British interests are involved" will not appear very relevant to those who support *collective* security. More and more evident is it that Germany has too many guns, not enough food, and is prepared to use the guns to win more food. Goering tells us: "The situation of world politics leaves us no time for rest . . . . we desire a share, and *we shall have*



a share in the treasures of the world. . . . The fact is we are in a fortress." And Goebbels caps this by stating: "There is a shortage of butter, pork, and eggs. Yes, but now we have cannons and aeroplanes. We confess our faith in Nietzsche's motto: "A man must have the courage to live dangerously." When will Germany decide to take the risk? From whom will the "treasures" be taken? Against whom will the guns be used? Apparently only a pretext remains to be found. It is quite clear what Italy means when her leaders state that Germany and she are the bulwarks protecting Europe from Communism, "just as Japan has been the protector of Asia." Some European nations, however, may not enjoy being shielded in the way that China is.

\* \* \*

It is appalling to find that the League of Nations is now concerned to discover not whether Italy has a right to devour Abyssinia, but whether Abyssinia has really been completely and thoroughly devoured. The only thing which now prevents Abyssinia from being excluded from the League is the fact that some portions of her territory seem to be as yet unconquered. The Big Powers sincerely trust that this technicality will soon be cleared up. It is significant that Mussolini admits that the "crisis" will be felt in Italy for eight years instead of four in other countries. This is a result not of Fascism, of course, but of the lack of "outlets" for the population. Yet, ever so quietly, Mussolini's Government has just decreed that emigration to Abyssinia must stop. . . .

\* \* \*

In view of the situation in Palestine, the sending out of a Commission, and the possibility of a local Council being set up, it is instructive to consider the results of the new Ceylon Constitution and State Council, set up in 1931. It will be quite clear, if the facts are examined, that these natives ought not to be trusted with their own affairs. The *Morning Post* tells us that this experiment, by giving them "70 per cent. self-government," is proving disastrous for the best people ("the most responsible elements in the country") :—

"Income Tax was introduced in spite of vigorous protests. The objections may not be valid in theory, but they have considerable force in the peculiar conditions in Ceylon, where the tax is mostly paid by companies which are European, salaried employees who are Europeans, and Civil Servants."

This is just the kind of thing that will happen if you give the

slightest power to these natives : they will proceed to tax the people with the money. Preposterous. As the *Morning Post* points out :—

“ There is fertile ground in Ceylon for the agitator and we have a small band of agitators, who are undoubtedly in touch with Moscow, and see nothing to prevent them from inciting the Sinhalese people to disaffection. The Sinhalese are generally peaceably inclined, but they are a proud, sensitive race and easily swayed by mischievous propaganda.”

It is to be hoped that the equally proud and even more sensitive Arabs will be given no chance to be led astray by misguided attempts to let them have a say in their own affairs.

\* \* \*

As here suggested last July, there was never much doubt but that Roosevelt would again sweep the country. This he has most effectively done. It now remains for him to see what he can do further to discourage the anarchical instincts of the big industrialists and bankers. There can be no doubt that he will use his mandate to alter a social system which allows almost limitless privilege to be coupled with complete irresponsibility. It should not be long now before he is called a Communist.

\* \* \*

One great disadvantage of the tendency, now prevalent, to stick the label “ Communist ” on anyone who advocates any reform with which the speaker does not agree, is that by indiscriminate use a political label, like an epithet, loses all meaning. The method, of course, is far from being a new one. In this country during the war, those who ventured to suggest that English rule was not altogether good were dubbed pro-Germans. This happy device relieved their opponents of all necessity to prove that English rule *was* an excellent thing, and victory was deemed to be on their side if they could show what an evil man the Kaiser was. Examples of such muddled and incoherent thinking still abound here, but perhaps the height of absurdity was reached when the “ Save the Children ” organisation was dubbed “ Communist,” on the grounds that they proposed to collect money for the suffering children of Madrid . . . .

It is to be hoped that in the pages to be set aside next month for the expression of readers’ views, our critics, if they resort to the use of epithet and label, will at any rate justify their choice, before proceeding to waste their time, and our space, by skilfully demolishing idols which they have themselves erected.

OWEN SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON



## NATIONALITY AND CULTURE.

THE dominant character in Irish life is anarchy. That anarchy is not a thing of yesterday or to-day. It is with us now as it was with us one hundred years since, five hundred or seven hundred years past.

By anarchy we mean the absence of the Rule of Law: that there is no *common* order and canon of Irish life, deriving authority, under God, from the Irish people. We can see that anarchy to-day in our politics, our social forms, in religion, economics, and, in its most manifest form, in the dismemberment of the country and its partition, by overwhelming force from abroad, into two states.

For the moment I will here consider the effect of this anarchy on our culture—on our music, art, craftsmanship, architecture, literature.

Our development from the last few years of the eighth century to the present moment (797—1936) has been lawless. With but a century and a half of respite (1014—1172) there has been a ceaseless struggle by elements other than Irish to gain dominion over Ireland, and on the part of the Irish, one unending struggle to expel or to absorb, metabolise, and digest into Irish tissue and substance these extern elements.

Had Ireland, after the Viking menace was ended at Clontarf, suffered the normal fate of a western European people, we should have in this land to-day all that noble architecture, sculpture, music, and painting which distinguishes our fellows in Europe. We should have all the rich trappings of the early, middle, and late mediaeval world, and its continuance through the Renaissance into the present-day world. But our fate has been unlike that of any other people in Europe, or even in this world—excepting the Jews. For all that immense space of time from 797—1936 with but that one century and a half of respite, we Irish have been fighting for our lives. In the terrible will to live, culture of necessity has been jettisoned. And so we have that strange anomaly: a great and heroic people with a soul, but with little culture.

That anarchy or diarchy in Irish life, the struggle of the Irish to establish a native canon and a native law and of other elements to substitute for that native canon a foreign canon and a foreign law is manifest to-day in the estrangement of Irish letters from Irish life ; especially in that form of literature which describes Irish life in the written word by narrative fiction in prose—the Novel.

The Irish novelist—I use the word in a generic sense—is estranged from Irish life. He must almost of necessity too often give a false interpretation of the norm of Irish life. The terms of his employment, the canon he obeys, the medium in which he works, the place he occupies in Irish society, make it almost impossible for him to reflect the norm of Irish life. Whether he lives in Ireland or is a *déraciné*, he is, and must be, embittered. The Irish novelist is not an integral part of Irish life. He has no reading public here. Nine out of ten of his sales are sales out of Ireland.

Such a man may within the limits of his power give a true and good account of Etruscan pottery. It is difficult under the conditions in which he works to give a normal Irish interpretation of Irish life. He can reflect Irish life as seen by an Irishman through the eyes of a British publisher and a British public. He cannot reflect Ireland as seen by an Irishman living in organic Irish life. The Irish writer has power over Irish society without responsibility to Irish society, for Irish society has no responsibility to him, does not secure him that which it gives to a yeoman, a lawyer, an industrialist, a cattle dealer—bread and sustenance.

Much of his work may be of a neutral shade, colourless, even appreciative of Irish life. But I am speaking of mass effects and the general impression.

It is not a question of the freedom of the artist, of the legitimate right of the writer or artist to interpret the lights and the shadows. It is a question of the abiding impression and the similitude of the likeness. The abiding impression



one gets of the ancient Greek life or Roman life as interpreted by the Greek or Roman, of English life and French life as interpreted by Frenchmen and Englishmen, and I presume, of Swedish life and Norwegian life as interpreted by Norwegians and Swedes, is the essential goodness of Greek, Roman, French, English life. The abiding impression one gets of Irish life as interpreted through the English medium, whether it be Spenser or Davies in the sixteenth century, the social memoirs, histories, state papers, the Anglo-Irish novel of the nineteenth century and the continuing tradition into the twentieth century, is two-fold: first, the futility of Irish life, second the badness of Irish life, badness of quality and character. Now the Irish are not a futile people. They are not a bad people. They are a great people and they are a good people.

They have left the imprint of their mind on European civilisation. They have resisted for hundreds of years storms and strains that would have broken any other people—save only the Jews. And even to-day second only to England herself, have they put the stamp of their spirit on the vast English-speaking world. Can any one in true sincerity say that he gets anything remotely approaching the greatness of that achievement from those who interpret our life in fiction through the English medium?

And as for criticism, true criticism lies in the balancing of forces. It takes note of the opportunity, the time and the place. A parade of the wounded after the great wars is not the time to laugh at the blind that they cannot see, or the maimed that they cannot walk. It is the occasion for chaste reproof and a helping hand.

When I look at this Ireland around me I do not see futility and vain endeavour. I see a dismembered country given to a peasant people after a rebellion, after a great war, during which the most ancient realms of Europe toppled down on all sides. After years of an Anglo-Irish guerilla war, I see a statelet born in the pangs of a civil war. Scarce had that

civil war ended when ninety-five per cent. of the state's exports were threatened with ruin. I see a people surmounting all these troubles, building here in fourteen short years a social economy that may well be a model for Europe—inspired at the present moment by a sincere fervour to end that heritage from that nineteenth and eighteenth centuries—the slums.

The Russians have filled the world with their five-year plan and ten-year plan, plans which has Hitler truly said, have brought several famines to a land of plenty. For our achievements no word of appreciation from our social commentators !

This anarchy or diarchy of Irish life and letters, the absence of a common canon in which Irish life and criticism of Irish life can meet on a common ground is responsible for a narrow, sour, jaundiced Jansenism we all deplore—a puritan life opposed to Irish tradition, a catholic society estranged from catholic tradition.

One section wishes to harness Irish life to a decadent liberal philosophy which has brought anarchy on European society, caused that universal blight which has settled on Europe's architecture, poetry, music and art. Can we be surprised another section by reprisal wants Ireland to be a puritan state ? One section desires that Ireland be a province of British culture, or worse still, a colourless patch in a robot Europe. Another section by reprisal wants Ireland to be a province of the Gaeltacht. Those who try to walk the middle of the road do not desire that Ireland should be a province of the Gaeltacht, nor a province of Britain. They desire that Ireland should be herself—what she is to-day, what she was one hundred, five hundred or a thousand years past, and what she will probably be a hundred, five hundred years hence—a people with a special character, identity and personality of their own, autonomous, autochthonous, expressing their own mind in their own way ; a traditional people of traditional Europe—not this Europe of bolsheviks, anarchists, aryan or anglo-saxon myths.



I can never understand a certain arrogance in Irish letters—that the Irish writing man should be superior to Irish society ; that the culture of the people is no concern of the people ; and that the whole future of their life and literature should be determined for them by experts and technicians. On the principle, I presume, that a man must write a primer of political economy before he has any say in determining the economy under which he lives ; or write a little brochure on politics before he votes at a general election ; write a novelette before he can have any appreciation of literature ; and pass an examination in public health before he can give his views on social medicine.

Burke said never was a people wrong and its government right. The new gospel would imply a people with its government are wrong, half a dozen writers are alone right. Had we Palestrinas, Mozarts, Raphaels and Dantes walking our streets, we could understand this superiority complex ; but then, Dante, Raphael, Palestrina, would not have known what we were talking about, were we to suggest the society all round them was different from them. The consummate artists and writers were in perfect harmony with their people, and clothed in beautiful imagery the plain thoughts of the plain man. The great Attic dramatists were in harmony with the Athenian audience. The great mediaeval craftsmen were so much part of society that they did not know they were artists. They sleep unknown among the great burgesses and yeomen they themselves were.

An Irish audience protests in its national theatre at what it thinks is a slight on the national character. Straightaway a whole people is indicted for High Treason. I ask who has a better right to defend the national character in a national theatre than the Irish people. We would not expect Serbs or Dutchmen to come here to protest. It seems to me a fine healthy sign that the Irish should be interested enough in their own drama to raise a riot in the national theatre.

If the French foreign office sends a polite note to the Comédie

Française that a certain play, if acted abroad, is likely to injure French prestige abroad, the Comédie Française would at once withdraw the play from their foreign tour. And so would a British actor-manager act in answer to a request from the British Foreign Office. But when an Irish government makes a like request of our national theatre—at once there is a cry of the inviolability of the writer. It is not of course a question of art. It is a question of politics ; of Irish prestige, and of the national character at a most acute crisis in Ireland's political and national development.

And as a fact there is no better example of the two currents in Irish letters than O'Casey himself. O'Casey's Irish plays live because they were written with sympathy, humour, pathos, suffering, sincerity and understanding. His English plays are still born.

Sooner or later the national church will be confronted with this issue : you cannot have a catholic philosophy without culture—music, glass, painting, sculpture, the christian mysteries interpreted in the native idiom.

Sooner or later the Irish government will be faced by a dead wall. They will discover they are building a house without windows : that their political and national canon must conform to the cultural canon, or the cultural canon must conform to the political. You cannot have national ideals and political forms rotating in one plane, and the culture of the people, music, literature, art, architecture, non-existent, or rotating on a different plane.

If your culture be British your polity must be British. If your polity be Irish your culture must be Irish. That does not mean there should be enmity and bitterness towards Britain ; any more than there should be bitterness and enmity between the colour, shape and life of a violet, and the colour, shape and life of a primrose. It is a question of human personality, that there is not one man and one mind in these two islands. There are two men and two minds—a British mind and an Irish mind.



It is right that the language by which the Irishman, for two thousand years, and to a time within the memory of people now living, expressed his thought, should be incorporated into the life of the Irish people. Our language revivalists forget that men reverence a language only so far as it is a vessel which carries a heritage of glories and remembrance from the past, great melody, great thought, and an inspiration and a hope for future time.

Our revivalists think of the language as a utilitarian implement like a Kaffir dialect, a spade for digging potatoes—a medium for asking the time. One man, a Ferguson or a Hyde, who makes a good translation of a simple Irish lyric into English, one man like O'Grady who interprets in the English medium our heroic saga, one sculptor, or one painter who interprets a western fisherman, Cuchulain, the missionaries, Deirdre, the spirit of the race does more for the revival of the Irish language than fifty itinerant propagandists, ninging and naaing, asking people their names, or telling us about the weather.

This language revival in its present form is estranged from and even opposed to the development of a true national culture ; for it is estranged from a conception of the nature of culture itself, of European culture, and of the relative place Ireland fills in the culture of Europe and western civilisation.

How then can a native literature and art and music be developed in harmony with a native tradition ?

*First* : I think it will come from our towns and countryside. Dublin is cynical, blasé, overcast with the last trailing memories of a great and vanished tradition—Georgian Dublin.

We have seen a native cinema spring to life but yesterday in a small country town ; created by those who created the art of Europe—the village school-teacher, lawyer, squire, butcher, barber, yeoman, burgess.

*Second* : The English language is overpowering. It is overpowering in the vast extent of territory covered, the numbers who speak it, by its utilitarian value, and by the immense

wealth of English literature compared with anything Ireland has created in Gaelic or in English. Until we create within that English medium a native periodic and cultural press, native readers, we shall be a Yorkshire, a Lancashire, a few isolated counties within a British culture; a British culture whose mind and social forms, racial tradition and metaphysics are quite different from ours.

*Third*: We should for the moment turn to those things which are independent of the written word, things in which we have a native tradition almost untouched—Music and Art—and as to these, I shall now make a few brief suggestions.

#### (1) ART.

(a) Let government set aside £14,000 each year, and give commissions to 30 or 40 artists to embellish our national and municipal buildings, town halls, post offices, custom houses, streets, market squares, with works of Art. Let there be two conditions:

(1) That they work within a native canon—our landscape, birds, trees, the great missionaries, our history, mythology, native types.

(2) That they be competent workers, as competent as we can get to-day. Let party affiliations or other considerations be set aside.

(b) We are spending or about to spend millions of money on hospitals, lunatic asylums, or clinics. Let Government set aside 1 per cent. or 2 per cent. of that money for a fund to be used in the adornment of these institutions by work of artistic merit; statuary, frescoes, panels, etc. One per cent., on a million will give £10,000; two per cent., £20,000.

#### (2) MUSIC.

Our Government controls by commissioners nearly all our municipalities. Let government foster in each town the creation of a choir, band, operatic society, no matter how bad or primitive. Let government give facilities in the local hall for the meeting of such band or choral society, and if necessary levy a small rate and subsidise the band by a small sum each year. Let the cultural elevation of the people be as much the policy of government as drains, public health, sanitation. The local commissioner may know as much about music or art as diphtheria or bridge construction, but he can get assistance and direction from central authority. A central library of band parts, choral music, etc., may be necessary. All that will develop of itself.

Let there be three conditions:

(1) Banish jazz.

(2) Let us have the best of the classic music of Europe—the simple forms first.



(3) Let the background and foundation of all be our native melodies and rhythmic dance forms. Let these be used as themes for orchestral and choral development and chamber music.

Government should secure some central hall in Dublin, no matter how small, to serve as a hall of music. This hall will have the imprimatur of the national will, and be detached from the commercial playhouses all round us. The size, the quality of the music or opera produced, is of secondary importance. The beginning is the great thing. *The recognition that culture is the care of a good government, and a good society, as much as lunacy or agriculture, law, medicine, engineering.* If the people are to remain in the country, the country and the country town must be made the home of music, drama and dance. You will in part solve the overcrowding of the city by making the countryside and country town more cheerful.

### (3) DRAMA.

The national theatre is the one persistent and virile native literary form we have, because it works with a native canon of criticism, a native audience, native actors, and Irish writers living in Ireland.

Government should foster the formation of dramatic societies in each country town and co-ordinate these with a central dramatic league, or society.

### (4) CINEMA.

The Irish cinema is already born. Let government help it by decreeing that half an hour of every programme should be made in Ireland, even though it be made by one man with a camera taking shots of seagulls off Loop Head. Later one hour can be made compulsory.

### (5) ARCHITECTURE.

Government should foster whether by competition or otherwise the development of a distinctive type of architecture, even though it be as simple as the old thatched cottage now fast disappearing.

### (6) LITERATURE.

The question of literature is confused by the miasma of the language. People will say it is impossible to create here a literature that will be national, that will depend on a native canon, native readers, and will maintain writers living in integral Irish life, as necessary to that life as a shopkeeper, a yeoman, or even a Cabinet minister ! They will say Ireland is too small. How small was Attica ! How poor Judea ! I hope to show how it can be done ; how living in organic harmony with the pulse and rhythm of the nation's life, the Irish writer can find bread in his own home. He can write in English, if he will, of his own people, and of the universe seen by an Irish mind and an Irish eye.

## *IMAGE AS A YOUNG LADY*

From Brandon comes a wind of birds

Your robe is afternoon and may  
Your voice is an old queen  
You are my patience, my Europe  
and the things that will not pass

In your reeds your glances  
disturbed by my shores  
your fingers froze farewell

The sun and the moon and the stars in your eyes

BRIAN COFFEY

## *ODALISQUE*

The foghorns bellow across the fields of fog  
The beat of my heart is firm Do you hear the steps  
Long lean steps of the watchman awakening night

What matter now that you were stupid to-day  
What matter that I saw all you saw  
Your talk pleased you so much I smiled

At least you did remark the tented seas  
Waves we saw jumping like antelopes  
And clouds, roan horses charging mountains

To-night do not tell me I am beautiful  
Do not say You are beautiful with such eyes  
My dog tells me as much as well

Be silent Let me think I am alone  
No sight in my eyes, no voice in my ears, with the night  
that draws down, draws down closer, closer comes

BRIAN COFFEY



# LIGHT FROM THE NORTH

## *The Sanity of Sweden*

A BLONDE giant sat next to me on the steamer that rocked her way over the Kattegat to Gothenburg in August. My eye caught a heading on his paper, "5,000 Irländska frivilliga till Spanien." Five thousand Irish volunteers were going to Spain on a Christian Crusade led by General O'Duffy. How would Hitler welcome the arrival of Celts on the Spanish scene? His alignments were becoming strangely non-nordic. Mongolian Magyars, Malayan, Japanese, Caucasian Berbers, Moors, Arabs (of Semitic stock !), Latin Italians, and a prospect of very non-Aryan Turks, Bulgarians, and slav Poles.

And now the descendants of Milesians were going on a visit to their original home as champions of that side in Spain which the leader of the "pure Germanic people" was commonly alleged to be supporting.

I was on my way to Lapland, and it was a relief to get away from the pages of "Red massacres" with which certain Irish newspapers at that time rarely failed to serve their readers. Sober by comparison the Swedish papers, but then the Lutheran Swedes had not resolved the Civil War in Spain into a religious conflict. But even by August there had been one or two "incidents" between Sweden and Spain. The *Gallia*, a Svenska Lloyd vessel, had been fired on by one of the Spanish Government warships outside Cadiz. And the *Gunberg* with twelve tons of explosives, said to have been destined for the Canaries, had been ordered by the French Government and by the Swedish and Spanish ambassadors in Paris to unload at Bordeaux. However, Swedish tempers were less testy than German ones over the *Kamerun* affair, which was then setting another spark in the direction of the European tinder-box.

With frigid calm the Swedes on the steamer continued to read their papers, on the day when the Nazi *Völkischer Beobachter* was saying: "Above the mountains of corpses in the Spanish

Civil War the Red Front of World Bolshevism raises itself in insolent threats, at whose command the vast columns of the 12,000,000 finest armed soldiers would march against Europe." (Would Lapland be free from Bogeys in red shirts, black shirts, blue shirts, brown shirts, green shirts, grey shirts—and, oh horror, had I not just read of yellow shirts?) I looked at the *Völkischer Beobachter*, which a German was reading, and saw the front page headline: "Soviet Army ready for War of Aggression," but not a Swede stirred in his seat. One is tempted to say it takes a Kreuger match to make one of them jump.

But Sweden, as much as any other country, and more so than many, owing to her peculiar problems, was alive to the international situation. She was a member of that Northern Bloc, represented by the Social Democrats as "the light from the North," that light which, according to Tolstoy, would one day save the world from darkness and destruction.

Sweden, although she had attached herself to the sterling bloc, and her chief economic interests might be said to lie with England, had yet considerable business interests in Germany. The Grangesbergkoncern, the leading Swedish iron firm, sent iron ore to Germany, a country which was known to covet Swedish mines, especially copper. But in 1936, Sweden was buying more products from England than ever before, and her pulp and timber trade with that country, for the last year available, amounted in terms of money to 325,000,000 kroner. As well as coal and coke, English cloth and boots were being imported extensively.

During the war of 1914–1918, considerable sympathy towards Germany was shown in Swedish military circles, especially among the higher officers, who professed an admiration for the Prussian military system. But the orientation now, in 1936, was towards England, and a further move in this direction has come with the electoral victory of the Social Democrats.

Sweden's position in international affairs is necessarily



affected by that of Finland, where there are still large Swedish settlements. And the relations between Sweden and Finland are somewhat complicated by the fact of Russia. The great Swedish fort at Boden has guns with a range of seven Swedish miles, and these guns would quickly come into action if any movement along the Swedish-Finnish frontier warranted this. Sweden's vast re-armament programme has met with no small opposition among her own people. Quite recently a protest sponsored by the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Union was addressed to the Defence Committee of the Riksdag, and reported by Nofrontier News Service as follows :—

“ We, friends of peace, deeply deplore the propaganda now being carried on intensively in our country to induce the Swedish people to participate in the armaments race now going on in Europe. For a century and a quarter the people of Sweden have enjoyed the benefits of unbroken peace. That this did not depend upon our military strength must be self-evident.” A warning that “ the development of modern war technique has made the possibility of military defence for small countries wholly illusory,” was also contained in the protest, which stated that “ Swedish foreign policy has nothing to gain from increased armaments.”

It was commonly said in left-wing circles in Sweden this summer that Finland had an understanding with Germany whereby Germany could use the Finnish ports in the event of a war. In a Soviet paper suggestions were made that Finland's aerodrome building was designed to assist foreign aggression against Russia. The suggestions were denied by responsible Finnish Ministers, and in certain Finnish political circles it was stated that the Russian allegations were made in order to discredit Finland in Scandinavia. Sweden, keeping calm, was also keeping her eyes busy.

The fact could not be overlooked that in the Baltic, Germany was the big power to-day. In the event of a war between Germany and Russia, the Baltic States would almost certainly

be involved. These States were once part of Russian territory, and a section of the people in Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia, though evidence as to any expansionist policy on the part of Russia seemed wanting, had a fear of the possibility of a Russian reconquest. There were some who regarded an increase of German power along the east Baltic littoral as less undesirable than any Russian penetration. Officially, Lithuania and Germany were, in 1936, far from friendly, owing to the outstanding question of Memel. And Lithuania's position is always complicated by her long hostility to Poland over Wilna. The retention by Poland of the former capital of Lithuania made the latter country regard with disfavour any prospect of being ranged, in a Russo-German issue, on the same side as Poland. And Poland was regarded in some quarters as a probable ally of Germany.

To travel about Europe in the summer of 1936 was no holiday, with everyone waiting to see which way their neighbour's cat was going to jump. Ireland, with her internal political dissensions, seemed a simple problem by comparison. She and her ancient "enemy" were alone in Europe in having no frontier lines. "What will Ireland do if England goes to war?" How many times are Irish people asked that on the Continent? Swedes, though thankfully they talked less about war than most other countries did, remembered the *Aud*, manned by a German crew, sailing through the Kattegat with arms and ammunition intended for the Irish Rising in 1916. But they were ready to believe the assurances of responsible people in Ireland that, in the event of England becoming involved in a European war, Ireland would not be used as a base for enemy operations against Britain. The Swedish pressmen I met did not, however, go so far as one Finnish journalist who envisaged the application of "Cuban" provisions by England to Ireland. Swedish foreign correspondents were well aware of Ireland's real position. Whether acceptable to Irish people or not, the fact remained that England had ultimate control of Ireland's coastal defences.



Sufferers from war psychosis could find no better place for cure than Sweden. In Stockholm, the most civilised capital in Europe, they will hear less of war than in any other large-sized city abroad, except perhaps in Sweden's second town, Gothenburg. For that reason I was sorry to leave the latter. And it is the cleanest port in Europe. I went down to the docks one night, and saw the Gotaverken Quay floodlighting the *Fjord* steamer from Norway, gold-bright ripples flecked the steel-cold water, silver-black, a swift stream of flame ran over molten metal. Sirens boomed across the harbour, but the quays were silent, except for the creaking of the fishing boats as the water rocked them, and the chough-choughing of the last little steamer that was fussily puffing its way to one of the islands.

But in the morning there was no busier place in Scandinavia. Among the maze of shipping, men at work loading pulp, discharging pipes; the coal-tug *Farjon* was chug-chugging while, stripped to the waist, perspiring, their bronzed backs oily with sweat, gleaming in the strong sunlight, muscles quivering, arms flashing, the workers coaled up the *Viking*. The *Albrekt-sund* and the *Marstrand* were calling passengers aboard crowded decks; the *Udevalla* from Oslo, the *Tell* and the *Lilly Gullholmen* loading up their holds; tubs of salted fish were landed from the *Egon* and *Runa*, and the *Bothnia* was discharging jute from Dundee. Siemens Schuckhardt's shed brought my mind round to the Shannon; here the workers were straining at ropes round castings; the rattle of *kranar*, mammoth cranes, brought men on to the track-lines and up swung another sheet of moulding.

Down along the Stigsbergskajen, the Swedish American Lloyd Dock, the *Gripsholm*, largest of the Company's motor vessels, rose a high wall of whiteness above quays and sheds, the latest luxury liner. On her buff funnels were the three crowns of Sweden, blue and gold. Above them, midget men with shining pails, washing the paint around the huge elliptical craters. Men above the crowns.

On the Masthuggskajen a bell warned of the coming of the

great *kran*. Slowly it moved into position, and like some death-dealing insect with antennae and eyes outstanding from the head, magnified a thousand times, the crane with its car and side windows, turned its long neck to the left, slowly sent out a feeler, and the hook descended for its prey. Swaying slightly this hook was caught by human hands below. Then the chassis of a Chrysler was swung vertically to the ship's side. A crimson bodied car with all its complicated mechanism exposed, a maze of tubes and rib-like sections, a human corpse dissected.

St. John Gaffney and Georges Chatterton-Hill stood on this same quay in June, 1917, when on their way to Stockholm to try to secure recognition for Ireland at the Internationalist Socialist Peace Conference. Gaffney found the food problem acute in Gothenburg, owing to the blockade enforced by the Allies against Germany. It was a different matter to-day, with the *smörgåsbord*—the Swedish cold table—with its endless variety of meats and fish, at the hospitable Strand Hotel. And it would have been pleasant to go on staying there, right by the quay, if it hadn't been for the non-Swedish visitors who talked of war. "I'll take the first train to Stockholm and catch the Lapland Express," I said.

But I went to Skansen first to look down on Gothenburg for the last time. Red rocks, white ships, silver petroleum tanks. The *Styrso*, the *Arlan*, and the *Faring* were steaming down to the bar; the *Westkusten* and the *Danafiord* slowly entering the Sannegardshamnen; the fishing smack *Prins Karl* circling around the giant *Odin*: movement everywhere on the blue sheet of water, a ceaseless coming and going of vessels, cranes describing semi-circles, bisecting arcs, cutting segments; a bustling from point to point of miniature men, dynamic forces in opposition to the long, static line of low, old hills.

MAIRIN MITCHELL

## POETRY AND THE MODERNS

THERE are those who believe that a new era is now commencing, in which not only will the extent and application of knowledge increase, but literature also will undergo fundamental changes, and its foundation in human nature will have altered. Such has been the belief of youth in every age, but we have yet to learn that the development of science has subdued the passions of mankind.

That vulgarized education has not achieved good results only is certain ; and that it has been, not a cause, but a by-product of what is called progress, is an arguable proposition ; and although it is paradoxical to assert, because we can shew no examples of such suppression, that genius is never suppressed by circumstances, yet there are to-day no more and no greater geniuses than there were four hundred years ago, when the population was less, and the opportunities fewer. Education is a double-edged weapon, universally dangerous in unskilled hands. When reading was not an habitual and universal practice, indulged without anticipation and forsaken without regret, literature did not depend on the suffrage of the vulgar. The nature of man has not changed, but as the reading public has increased in numbers, it has declined in judgment ; which may explain why the poetry of to-day is so often obscure in meaning and harsh in presentation.

It has been justly observed that poetic obscurity is of two kinds, one of which is caused by the attempt to express in language what language will with difficulty admit ; while the other is the result of fashion or affectation. The poet, as the late Right Honourable Augustine Birrell took occasion to remark, may be misty, but never muddy.

Obscurity is a phenomenon of the latest sort of poetry, where, no doubt, it is largely due to the wish, conscious or not, to please only those who are willing and able to devote some labour and sagacity to the reading. This may be the reason



of the present cult for Donne, whose *Songs and Sonnets* went "through private chambers," and whose audience was therefore limited. Mr. Eliot's *Waste Land* pleases those who have the learning and ingenuity to follow his allusions and symbols. As some insects simulate the appearance of others whose flavour is unpleasant, so many recent poets seem instinctively to assume a shape that will make them unattractive except to the patience of inquiry, the idleness of fashion, or the enthusiasm of party. Although the way in which this limitation of audience occurs is unfortunate and undesirable, it is explicable and excusable.

In literature the search for novelty is eternal ; and in the new statements of human mentality novelty is easily found. The guerilla advance guard of recent literature follows, with extraordinary precision, the development of that remarkable author, Mr. James Joyce. Like him, it concentrates more and more on the overt and verbal expression of incoherent and subconscious attributes of mind ; but these mental states neither take form in words, nor are coterminous with words ; nor can literature communicate without words. If they belong to the province of any art, it is to that of music, where the rational faculties of man are of least account. A valid distinction has lately been discovered, or rather formulated, between words as emotive and words as informative. But where there is distinction, there is not necessarily separation. It is only possible, even to the most athletic and acrobatic mind, to think separately of these verbal qualities by a forced and temporary effort. When we meet with words, to expect meaning and to experience emotion are concomitant habits, of which the insemination is remote, and the eradication improbable. The novelty, which association with the findings of psycho-analysis gives to this distinction, seems to lead many to believe that the separation can be sustained indefinitely, and language wholly purged of either emotion or meaning. But it is admitted that poetry is emotional, therefore new poets tend towards words without meaning, and emotion without sense.

By *sentimentality* we mean the provocation or experience of emotion through causes unsuitable or inadequate. Of late so much emotive language has proved deceitful, and has been used to prevent rational thought, that to-day thoughtful people put little trust in such language, except as the direct expression of emotional events (when it is infrequently intelligible) or as propaganda (when it is sometimes disingenuous). The problem of the modern poet is how to justify his emotion and avoid sentimentality; which he strives for either in faithfulness to the hidden workings of the mind, or in devotion to rational justice. As a psychologist, the poet tries to express what he cannot describe. As a propagandist, he tries to persuade his readers to his belief by inducing into them, at worst, a sentimental emotion favourable to his belief, and at best, a sympathetic emotion closely akin to his own. If he does the one, he is as much to be condemned as any other sentimental writer; if he does the other, he has to communicate an unusual emotion, the product of intellectual belief, not easily understood by ordinary people, or expressed in ordinary language. In any case, the ordinary people will find him difficult to understand, even if he is careful of clarity; and it follows that he will not regard their comprehensions, and both the realist of the subconscious and the idealist of abstract justice will achieve obscurity and a limited audience.

Though the circumstances of the time compel a limited audience for many of the best sort of writers, limitation is practised with a stringency which is unduly severe, and obtained by methods which are often mischievous. It is easy to see an ill effect of this in the criticism emanating from the lesser followers of Dr. I. A. Richards, who establish a limited theocracy of writers usually meritorious but rarely popular, and whose selection seems to be governed by *a priori* rules, of which the existence is more obvious than the principles. That they admit Shakespeare is probably due to the decrease of his popularity with the increase of education, for to them popularity is not

only a vice, but also a mortal sin. A rational code of critical rules cannot come from those who treat a symptom, not yet even proved a symptom of disease, as a dangerous epidemic.

Much modern poetry looks licentious, yet poets have not often seen so clearly as now what they wish to avoid, and what they attempt to do; while their principles favour discipline rather than extravagance. Obscurity has something to do with this. New fashions in poetry are usually censured as obscure, and they seem obscure till their conventions are familiar and their methods adopted by writers whose thought is not novel or difficult. But a real obscurity seems even more inherent in the present fashion than in the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century, or the mystical poetry of the nineteenth.

The language of poetry differs from that of common speech, and those who have attempted otherwise have only produced the ridiculous. But there is a relation between them; as one alters, so does the other, though in more ways than by the mere passage of time of which Horace speaks—

*verborum vetus interit aetas*

*et iuvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.*

Many other changes take place which are governed by associations of emotion, or accidents of use. To trace these is neither profitable nor possible. We enjoy or dislike earlier poetry partly on account of the writer's language. The vocabulary of Tennyson we cannot tolerate; but we take pleasure in Coleridge, Pope and Donne. Where the narrow verbal associations of a diction have become unintelligible through age, or are obliterated by the passage of time, we are better able to understand the broader associations and judge the deeper qualities of poetry; but where they are still present and appreciable, although as signs of a past recently outgrown, we detest the poetry, for all that we can understand it (uncharitably, at least); indeed, we understand it too well, and feel it too little. Who can see poetic force in the diction of Collins? Yet Coleridge



perceived it there, and even adopted some of its phrases.

The new poetic diction resembles that of other times in this, only that it is remote from common speech ; for it pays but negative attention to the traditions of literature and the convention of language. It seems to be thought that, by exercising a free and unconventional choice, words may be chosen for nothing but their power to evoke emotion ; or, when they are new and technical or ancient and forgotten, for their lack of that power, since then they may easily be bent to the will of the poet. This assumes the possibility of separating meaning from associations, denies the impossibility of analysing association at all fully, and forgets that the ability to recognize counts for more than the search for the happy word. To choose a word because it evokes a certain emotion, and not because it seems felicitous, is to practise literature according to the principles of American advertisement, and to neglect sincerity in order to urge commodities. This is pretty well what is meant by sincerity, that the poet should not write according to the supposititious judgment of prospective readers, but should criticise from an elevated and purged condition of his own taste and judgment : the more his achievement can satisfy that criticism, the greater his sincerity ; the better the condition, the greater his chances of other merit.

Of literature the discussion is corrupted and the consideration hindered by confusion in the senses of the most fundamental terms. Even *verse* has been infected, and used in senses other than *metrical writing*. *Poetry* is used : first and colloquially as the equivalent of *metrical writing* ; second and most often as a term of praise for powerful and emotional verse ; third as a term of praise for all powerful and emotional writing ; fourth, for very rhythmic writing which is not metrical, that is, for ' free ' verse, so-called, and poetic prose ; fifth, among the advanced, as a term of abuse for sentimental writing ; and sixth as a general literary, or even aesthetic, term of praise. It is surprising that *verse*, and only less surprising that *prose*, have

suffered misuse, since their senses are plain, and their misuse supplies no need. *Verse* means metrical writing; *prose*, writing which is not metrical. With *poetry* it is different; several new words are needed. But we cannot help using the word in two senses; as a term of praise for all verse which produces the partly physical thrill which Housman so well described in his *Name and Nature of Poetry*, and as a term of praise for all writing of this kind. For this thrill is peculiarly associated with verse, of which we have to think whenever we say *poetry*, even though the maker may make in verse or prose.

That definition of poetry ought to be based on the mental processes of the poet is a fallacious and romantic belief. It disregards the readers, and condemns the critic; for it, the reader's function is applause, and the critic's interpretation; but it returns to our minds that the reader's function includes selection, and the critic's judgment. Not the writer's feeling as he writes, but the reader's experience as he reads, determines what is poetry and what has merit; and therefore a satisfactory definition of poetry can only be based on an analysis of the reader's experience. It is freely to be admitted that many circumstances, including general ignorance, prejudice and inconsistency, make an absolute definition highly improbable, and that much adjustment, limitation, refinement and analysis are necessary before even an approximate definition can be reached; but a definition which does not chiefly take the reader's experience into account can never be valid. Poetry must be interesting. In *being interested* the notions of both learning and pleasure are present; we always seek information from what we read, information about the poet's thoughts, whether they be of atomic philosophy, sexual love, or the habits of birds; and after we are said to be educated, we usually read for pleasure. Horace was putting himself in the reader's place when he observed

*Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci  
Lectorem delectando pariterque monendo.*

But we must understand *teach* more broadly than is usual in

speaking of literature, where it is inclined to suggest dogmatic morality rather than informative didaction. As at school, so from literature, much of our learning is indirect ; and as from tone in speech, so from style in writing do we derive much of the information we receive.

Fixed rules cannot be established about the relation of poetry and literary form, so various is it ; but experience shews that verse has most often gone with the most successful poetry (in the third sense). Recent poetry is handicapped by its addiction to ' free verse ' ; although the most obvious and least intelligent objection, that it is the result of the writer's indolence, is made by those who think that prose-writing simply consists in writing down thoughts as they come. This does not seem hard to them, while arbitrarily dividing the result into lines seems even less hard. This is stupid, but there is a strong case against ' free verse,' the authors of which sometimes suffer, not undeservedly, from the *spretæ injuria formæ*. The formal differentiation of ' free verse ' from verse is automatic. It is free from the regular and repetitive rhythm which distinguishes verse, and lacks even the regularizing influence of rhyme ; it gets its name on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*. But the crux is its differentiation from prose, on which its existence as a separate form depends. In prose, verse rhythms are avoided because they make an unpleasant contrast with that irregular and non-repetitive rhythm ; and when they occur in ' free verse,' especially if the passage be spoken aloud, they have the same unpleasant effect. The distinction lies in the way in which they are printed ; and the printing of ' free verse ' seems to be the result of an attempt to evade convention. But conventions are destroyed by being broken, not by being evaded. Those who wish to destroy the convention of wearing clothes do not pretend to wear clothes ; they glory in their nakedness ; but ' free verse ' is naked prose pretending to wear the clothes of poetry.



I quote a passage from a poem about Ireland :

“ In a far place I heard tell  
That it is two names she has now ;  
But I have not heard them at all ;  
And, though my mind keeps her face,  
It has lost the old name.

Beautiful she was when I knew her ;  
With the walk of a goddess, a Greek,  
The eyes of a fairy,  
The lips of a child.”

“ In a far place I heard tell that it is two names she has now, but I have not heard them at all ; and, though my mind keeps her face, it has lost the old name. Beautiful she was when I knew her, with the walk of a goddess, a Greek, the the eyes of a fairy ; the lips of a child.”

Is this not better when it is undismembered by the butcher's chopper? There is little ' free,' as distinct from blank, verse that will stand this test.

Writers have never before broken so sharply with the traditions of poetry, however strange their innovations and striking their experiments. In the past, those who successfully built new kinds of poetry, studied and used the plans of the former. Where they demolished, they built on the foundation of the old, and even used its material for the new. Many advanced poets misdirect their abilities, and their self-expression is rather of eccentricity than individuality. They are like the golfing schoolmaster who found written on his blackboard one Monday morning, *Capax golfandi nisi golfassset...*

J. O. BARTLEY

## *FREEDOM NO OBJECT*

These are empty quaysides  
It might be midnight nearby  
Or a searchlight stripe on midnight

Enter stealthy who you know  
Propelled along in torpor  
He might be a river flowing  
Back to the source its author

He is pulled up short  
By stacks of sacked grain. He  
Pushes, his legs move  
Up and down and free.

DENIS DEVLIN

## *LORD, I CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS*

The diplomat has bared his head  
The wine spreads across the cloth  
Give me stones for leavened bread:  
My spine's pipette will fume in wrath

I knew a gifted girl, she spoke  
Languages more than Noah's beasts  
She took the veil, she left her folk,  
Flirting despair with Mormon priests

What will you give me if I tell?  
I cannot speak, my hands are tied  
Shame like an Alderman in Hell  
Has broke me down until I cried.

DENIS DEVLIN

## NOX EST PERPETUA UNA DORMIENDA

Dropped into the night of Autumn, fire-deprived,  
and the mumble of the city traffic poor substitute  
for the unremarkable friendliness of talk ;  
the night cold, unfrosted, with Summer remembered  
only in its prayers ;  
the leaves dropping for very boredom ;  
the thoughts fingering, about the heart, remembering,  
the warm memories groping about the eyes.  
Odd phrases of the shadowed path,  
the globed street lights, the memories . . . .  
Have I anything but memories to people the world ?

Here I have seen the mirrored world grow fine,  
the milk-teeth of the dawn  
and the untrembling pressure of the sun  
Pack Clouds Away ;  
bestrewed with jewellery of dew  
these hedges, these carefully loved lawns,  
like ageing ladies dreaming of their spring,  
gathering for one last ball their hurrying youth  
to turn to wonder all their later days,  
have worn the morning on their polished breasts,  
brought to green smoothness by the lawnmower's industry,  
not by the long caress of lover's fingers.

And then on a night, the rain coming up,  
the lights blurred and the rain a garment  
wrapping each from each, putting a universe between,  
—an element,  
between brother and brother.  
The rush past of motors veiled,  
and O, the rain is so full of images, the drops  
each springing like a candle, the roads turned to  
dark mirrors  
in an empty room.

To warm the hands on the stars  
to stretch the hands, flexible as the mind,  
out to the unknown constellations,  
groping between ; to turn, turn the head till the eyes  
saw to-morrow as to-day ; to thread the emotions  
on a string,



to fade over the housetops lying along  
the direction of the gaze,  
to tear the heart out of the breast and shake it  
    defiantly  
in the face of the interfering constable  
would make the night  
less imbecile.

Think, think, to the measure of the hurrying feet,  
remember what has never occurred, recount what has  
    never happened,  
speak the night's words in the night's way,  
leave sanity for day,  
when businessmen will walk  
this pavement, and typists home from work.  
Night is all dreaming.

DONAGH MACDONAGH

## RENUNCIATION

Now separate  
Our ways renunciate,  
Nor may we live  
The balm that each would give,  
Of pathways far apart ;  
So, we remain,  
(Is it the spirit's gain ?)  
Costly to expiate,  
Heart riving heart ;  
Pain welded deep on pain.

MÁIRE COTTER

## WE MUST RISE UP TO REBELLION AGAIN

*We must rise up to rebellion again  
all my fine marksmen  
for Ireland is still pulled down  
and pinioned by the eagles.*

Some of them are from the island  
whose lords once paid us  
wages,  
most of them are our own  
out of a new brood.  
It is a broken island we have built  
for all our shooting  
and it will be a hard thing to mend it whole again.  
The least we can do is to begin,  
to let our farmers command from their fields  
and workers from their factories.  
For if it is two Irelands we made  
it is two exploited places.  
The people still bend  
under their old superstitions  
and new masters.

The men of Ireland will never be free  
until they are all lords and equal comrades together.  
And then what is the difference  
between the Belfastman and the lad from Cork  
beyond the talk of him  
and a few prejudices unshared.  
Together they can dress their barricades,  
build a new Ireland with their hands.  
And welded together again the broken island.

*We must rise up to rebellion again  
all my fine marksmen  
for Ireland can not be pulled down  
and pinioned by the eagles.*

BRIAN MCCRUDDEN

## ON THE MAKING OF MACHINES

How easy has become the starting of industries ! In the old days an industry, comparatively simple as it was, started in tedious fashion with an abstemious and unresting founder labouring from five or six in the morning until far on in the night, often sweating his workers, and denying them as well as himself all the common joys of life for the sake of the vision of his ultimate profits. Generally too there were special local advantages—sandstones for grinding knives, waterfalls for turning wheels, a junction of roads or waterways to give centrality, fine oak timber for charcoal or an easily accessible seam of underground coal, a damp atmosphere that saved the finer threads in a textile factory from breaking in ordinary weather, or a dry climate that favoured the growth of a particular kind of wool, or tin or lead or copper or iron mines that brought about the establishment of furnaces or forges. All these things, together with much toil and the training of operatives, brought the old-fashioned industries into existence, and the growth of an industry led always to an intense local demand for labour. The building of an industry may be said to have been founded in part on local advantages and in part on the lives of the founders, and of the underpaid, ill-clad, diseased and helpless men, women and children whom the founder used. So at any rate it was in a great many instances.

To-day if we wish to "start an industry" we may send away for a catalogue, and choose the kind of factory we want. Some firms, particularly German ones, will undertake to erect and equip any kind of industrial plant, and set it going as a working unit. The choice of a site is easy. There may be final difficulties about picking the very best, but there are any number of quite good ones well served with roads and railways, and having easy sea communications with all parts of the world. The supply of labour is easy too. Certain key hands, selected from the students at the local technical school will have to be sent away for a few months of intensive training and certain others brought in, but not much skill is really needed for serving a machine. Not much of anything is needed beyond the dexterity that comes from practice, while one or two good mechanics will quickly master most of the intricacies even of machinery that is entirely new to them. The office and sales staff is easily collected also. Any good salesman can pick up the new line of sales talk in a few days, any competent accountant can get the books into order, and any experienced office manager can organise the clerical routine. The problem of the market



is easy. You apply to the Government and as likely as not it gives you what amounts to some kind of monopoly. The problem of power supply is very easy. You turn over a switch and away you go, and the popular press hails you as a national benefactor. All you need, if you would accomplish all this, is credit.

And next? By foreign machinery the ground for the works was excavated, by foreign machinery the concrete was made, by foreign machinery the steel was rolled and the walls erected, by foreign machinery the machines themselves were made, by foreign machinery probably even the raw material has to be prepared, by foreign machinery the workers' time is checked, by foreign machinery the manufacturing processes are carried out, by foreign machinery the letters in the office are written, by foreign machinery the figures are entered in the ledgers, and by foreign machinery the goods are transported to the railway or over the sea.

Who then is employed by the new industry? A great many people abroad at first, and very few at home, and of those few, still fewer need to have much intelligence. It is all too simple. You may not be allowed to oppress your workers, but you will not employ many either.

Next to agriculture the world's greatest industry to-day is the making of machinery. The preparation of the machine is a large part of the process of manufacture. Even in agriculture this is true. We are dealing with our problems in a most short-sighted and superficial way if we import the machinery, set it going and sit back contented—though that may be better than nothing for a beginning. Of itself it cannot possibly solve the problem of unemployment.

The making of machines keeps on employing a larger and larger proportion of the world's people. Must we then undertake a share of this work ourselves, or fail in our endeavour to find work for all? The answer depends upon whether we are able to export enough of our produce to be in a position to pay for enough machines, which is unlikely. If our exports show a further decline in the coming years, as is most probable, we shall not be able to barter cattle or butter or eggs for all the new machinery we shall need, and we had better therefore ponder upon our chances of being able to make at least some for ourselves, and to develop an export trade in what we make—for machinery making is one of the very few manufacturing industries in which no country seems able to become self-sufficient. Machines are extraordinarily specialised, and all civilised countries to-day find themselves needing to import some of

the special types they use, while nearly all are able to export some of the specialities that they themselves are making. Have we then, with our absurd little population of three millions, any chance of developing a machine-making industry? If we had the population of ten or fifteen millions that we ought to have, our chances would be very much greater, and we may, if we open our doors, come to some such figures before this century is out, but in the meantime can we do anything to make it more possible for this supreme industry of machine-making to grow? It is not a thing that we can start successfully on a large scale by ordering it from a catalogue. It is even to-day in nearly all cases a natural growth.

The general rule is that the growth takes place in the locality where the machines are used. Thus the making of agricultural machinery on a small scale is found naturally in Wexford, the premier tillage country, and in Bedford, Lincoln, Chicago and St. Louis—centres of great tillage areas. The manufacture of modern churns and cream separators has sprung up naturally in Denmark. The making of flour milling machinery and of such things as combine harvesters, which are used where wheat is grown on a very large scale, has reached its highest development in such places as Buda Pest, for the plains of Hungary, and Chicago, for the American prairies. Cotton spinning and weaving machinery comes from Lancashire, where it was originally wanted for local use, though Lancashire is now exporting it and so equipping the world with the means for the destruction of her own cotton industry. The machinery for dealing with wool comes from Yorkshire and for linen from Lancashire and Belfast. There are exceptions. Individual enterprise shows itself in breaking rules and it is an odd fact that Belfast also, in its Sirocco Works, supplies the Asiatic plantations with the machinery they use in tea curing. That was solely because a certain Mr. Davidson of Belfast got an idea. Similarly, if a man in Mullinahone or Kilcock got an idea there is no knowing what might happen in Tipperary or Meath. Generally speaking, however, we may say that where an industry is concentrated there the machines for use in that industry tend to be made. First they may be only kept in order or repaired, but it is not a long step from repairing an old machine to making new parts for it and then to making a new machine altogether. Machines are, however, so extremely specialised that standardisation of parts is only beginning, and yet if they are to be made economically they must be made in large numbers. We cannot therefore have a machine-making industry merely to supply our own needs.

Are we in the Irish Free State developing our industries in such a way that the machine industry will be likely to grow? So far as official guidance is concerned we are not. The one thing the Government seems to aim at in its industrial policy is decentralisation, and the one thing that will help the machine-making industry to come into existence is centralisation. This does not mean that every industry should be in Dublin, but that so far as possible all branches of similar industries should be in the same region. This is not easy to arrange, though in certain instances it seems to be arranging itself. The making-up clothing industry has concentrated in Dublin, and so have the jam, sweet, chocolate and cigarette-making industries. If that concentration continues and our population grows, and becomes more wealthy, and those industries grow with it, we may count it as almost certain that at least some of the machinery they use, or some new types of machines will come to be made in Dublin also—through the enterprise or ingenuity of some handy mechanic who takes out a patent. Again, there is an accidental tendency for leather-making to be found in a fairly small southern area. Waterford, Carrick-on-Suir, Dungarvan, Gorey, Limerick and Cork have all got or are getting tanneries. That is fairly satisfactory, but it is not at all satisfactory to find the boot and shoe industry bespattered all over the country—Dublin, Dundalk, Carlow, Edenderry, Drogheda, Limerick, Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, Killarney and several other places. That is a result of bad planning or of no planning, and one could almost hope that some of these enterprises might fail so that a better concentration might take place. Every one of them probably looks to Northampton as its mother and its guide, and the source of its machines. The factories have no Irish centre, no concentration of mechanics who live in a world of boot and shoe machinery. Similarly it is regrettable that while cotton-spinning is to be carried on at Westport the weaving is to be done at Athlone, while linen spinning and weaving are localised at Dublin and Drogheda, and jute in Clara and Waterford. All these are to some extent related and they would be better in one district. We cannot plan everything. Unexpected mechanical genuises will doubtless arise here and there and unpredictable developments will take place. Wise plans that we try to make may not work out as we expect, but nevertheless in so far as we plan at all we ought to plan for ultimate as well as immediate desirabilities, and an essential ultimate desirability is not merely the automatic using of machines but their manufacture and their export.



## THE FLOWERING TREES

PREPARATIONS for the picnic had begun when word came of the Fiddler. On a mild Sunday afternoon in February he came and sat in what had been the garden of a big house long since deserted. With him came the Stutterer, who smoked a pipe. To Josie the other children brought the tale, but at first she paid no heed.

She had opened her account book for the year and sat over it, her rosy tongue curling pensively up her cheek. The accounts ran like this :—

Kitty Donegan	$\frac{1}{2}$
Madge Mahoney	$\frac{1}{2}$
Josie Mangan	1 and a appel
Peter Murphy	$\frac{1}{2}$

Beneath was written at least twenty times over in great, innocent astonished letters 'Josie Mangan.' Beneath that again, 'K. Donegan lovs P. Murphy.' In the next page, 'Totell 2 pense and a appel,' altered on maturer consideration to '2 $\frac{1}{2}$  and a appel.' Having pondered the matter still farther Josie struck out the appel and ate it.

But talk of the fiddler gradually excited her, and she grew envious of those who had found him first.

Sunday afternoon they set out, the whole gang, in ragged formation, with all the inevitable squabbles. K. Donegan and P. Murphy headed the procession, Peter on Kitty's rusty skate. Kitty, the eldest, was a tall red-headed girl with delicate inflamed eyes and a rough face. She walked with an air of intense dignity, her red head in the air. She was in love and held her man in bonds as firm as any marriage contract with her skate, which she never for an instant allowed out of sight. To impress them all, she turned as they came to the big houses by the river's edge and let out a bawl.

"Come on aisy, can't ye? Can't ye behave yeerselves? The fiddler will be gone, Lord God, I won't come out any more with you, Josie Mangan!"

"Sure, 'tisin't my fault," whined Josie. "Look at Jackie."

"Come on, Jackie, come on, love," coaxed Kitty. "Ah, sha, God love us! Come on now, Jackie boy, and you'll get a sweet!"

"Stop crying or you'll get a pucking," added Josie, sniffing.

"I wants to go home!" yelled Jackie, and threw himself flat on the path. Kitty raised him and held him up by main force by the breeches.

"Almighty God, I'm cursed and damned," declared Josie, red and tearful. Suddenly as the vision of the fiddler burst on her imagination anew, her tears changed to blind, unreasoning fury. Her eyes blazed. She smacked Jackie's hands. She smacked his face. She pummelled his stomach till he doubled up and fell. She pinched his behind. She made faces at him. Jackie screamed. Josie caught one hand and Kitty the other, and between them they dragged him, kicking and squealing, behind them. Kitty's weight won the day. To save his arms from dislocation, Jackie had to run. By this time he had reached the stage where stupefaction imposes itself, and the screams came only ten seconds or more after his will commanded them.

"Almighty God, grant the fiddler won't be gone!" prayed Josie.

Long before they came to the appointed place they stopped.

"Leave you go first," said Kitty to Josie.

"No, leave you."

"I won't. Leave Madge go."

It was Peter who finally planned that they should disperse and approach the field from every side, like Indians. Because of her small brother, Josie was permitted to enter by the gate. The rest came across the overgrown grass fences. Like Josie, most of them pretended to be looking for flowers, though it was too early for primroses. She, with bent head, picked her way carefully as though in fear of overlooking some fugitive blossom, straying here and there between the bare trees and the shrubs. In a few minutes the old garden was alive with hushed and questing children. Suddenly there rose from somewhere a whisper that was repeated till it became a cry.

"They're not here!"

Into the clearing in the centre, where the hollow was, the children gathered with long faces. It was only too clear that the strangers were not there. Kitty Donegan pointed out the very spot where they had sat. Gloom fell on them all. Kitty sent out patrols to search the neighbouring fields. When they returned the gloom became blank and utter.

As they went homeward, squabbling and dispirited, Josie felt like tears. It was her rotten luck! Now the mysterious fiddler was gone, and would not return.

Three weeks later another miracle! A kite, a box-kite, had been seen along the river bank on Sunday, and the gang was off to investigate. "Almighty God," Josie prayed in her emotional

way, "grant the kite won't be gone!" Jackie was being whipped briskly along behind her. A March day of scurrying clouds, and wind and sunshine, and a May-blue sky shining and darkening behind the baby leaves. "I'm threepence ha'penny now," declared Josie irrelevantly. "Ye'd better hurry up."

"I'm threepence anyway," said Kitty, clasping her skate under her arm.

"The summer'll be here any day now, so ye'd better hurry up," continued Josie. "We're a long way off sixpence yet, let alone a bob. How do ye think I can plot a picnic if ye won't even save up?"

Suddenly as they passed the field of their disappointment a strain of music rose in the air like a call.

"Sacred Heart!" cried Kitty dramatically, clutching her breast, "they're there!"

The gang stopped, aghast, all thought of the kite banished, all stricken equally with irresolution. Finally, for want of a better plan, they agreed to do what they had done before, and soon the field was alive with bobbing heads like chickens. But for very shyness not a peg farther could they stir. A fierce dispute was going on about Kitty Donegan who was trying to bully Madge Mahoney into leading the way. It lost nothing in fierceness for being carried on in whispers. When at last Kitty threatened to go home and take the gang with her, Madge surrendered.

Slowly she left her lair, slowly she strode down the field, her hips swinging in the coyest of coy motions, her head on one side and her index finger between her lips. From their ambush the gang, some on all fours, some bent double, tensely watched her progress. She passed within a few yards of the two men, sidled by them with modestly averted eyes, went on another few yards, and then paused to admire the view of sleepy river and low hills. Apparently satisfied she drew up her frock with an old-maidish gesture and sat down, keeping her eyes all the while on the view before her. When three minutes had elapsed and nothing had occurred to her, when she had even plucked a blade of grass and sucked it nonchalantly, the better to show her indifference, Kitty went forth, birdlike, her head in the air, her lips pursed, her eyes nodding hither and thither with remote and circumspect interest. In a few minutes the whole gang was sitting with its backs to the two men.

The fiddle struck up again behind. All heads turned together. The fiddler looked up from his instrument and smiled.



He was a good-looking man verging on middle-age, with a red-brown beard and blue eyes. The gang rose in mass and performed an encircling movement about him.

"Which of you can dance?" he asked, still bowing vigorously.

"She can, sir," said Kitty Donegan treacherously, grabbing Josie by the arm. Josie grew red.

"Come on then—what's your name?"

"Josie Mangan, sir," said the gang in chorus.

"Can you dance to that, Josie?"

"She goes to the Pipers' Club sir," chorussed the gang.

"Ah, well, maybe that's too hard. Try a reel." He changed the rhythm and broke into *Molly on the Shore*, and at the third bar Josie's feet began automatically to beat a response to the gay triplets. The girls stood with hands behind their backs, critically watching every step. As the music continued she took fire, the blood mounted her cheeks; she raised her head and stiffened her body till she felt it poised and motionless above her flying toes. It was impossible to make any real show of dancing in the grass where she couldn't hear as much as a heel-tap, but grass or no grass she was determined to captivate the fiddler. For the first time she found herself deliberately willing someone to admire her.

When the bell rang from the hill to call them to Benediction one star was alight, no bigger than the budding leaves among which it hung.

Each Sunday the gang went on its headlong way to the field. Sometimes their Fiddler was there, sometimes not. And always the evenings grew warmer and longer; they sat in the grass and told stories; over one night the trees seemed to shoot into leaf and bloom; and the decaying old garden came to life again. The hedges were thick with whitethorn; the fragrance was everywhere.

Sometimes the Fiddler and the Stutterer chattered while the children rambled away on their many quests. But they never knew what to make of the Stutterer. When he began to speak they looked at him in excitement, wondering what great things he was about to tell them. He would chuckle and choke and grow crimson, and wave his hands—but it never came to much that they could see.

But the Fiddler talked of everything under the sun, about Josie's father being a soldier and Josie's mother being dead, and Madge Mahoney being praised by the priest and Peter Murphy's big brother being dead. He talked a lot about death;

it seemed to fascinate him as much as the children ; he harped back upon it, now lightly as though it were a great joke ; then with gloomy insistence on the horrors of it, and yet again mysteriously, telling them of the Holy Souls in Purgatory or of ghosts.

He audited Josie's accounts which had assumed vast proportions and were very muddled, though this scarcely mattered because no one was likely to forget what was collected. The accounts merely defined Josie's authority which, in spite of Kitty Donegan, she was quietly but firmly extending. Sooner or later she intended to have her followers known to the world as ' Josie's Gang.' This authority was sometimes challenged, but she skilfully arranged for the Fiddler's support, and came out stronger than ever.

However, one day it came to open conflict. Kitty Donegan, with the aid of the skate and Peter Murphy, was endeavouring to split the gang. Josie lost her temper and called Kitty " Sore-Eyes." In spite of her age and size, Kitty was romantic and emotional. She broke down.

" You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Josie ! " said the fiddler sternly. " It isn't her fault if her eyes are red. God made us all as we are, and when you mock anyone you're mocking the good God who created them."

Josie, growing red, looked at him in consternation. Was this her Fiddler, holding her up to shame before her own gang ? As surely as she had thought the gang hers she had looked on him as her vassal, and now he was taking the side of Kitty Donegan against her. Of the moral sense of what he said she didn't understand a word. All she knew was that her dream was shattered, herself an outcast and mere hanger-on in the new alliance between the Fiddler and Kitty. Tears flooded her eyes and she walked away. On the road she began to weep, her face buried in the grass of the wall. Jackie joined her. Only Jackie ! The others, traitors and lip-servers had gone over to the enemy.

" What is it, Josie ? " he asked, beginning to cry, too.

" Never mind, Jackie ! " she sobbed. " They can have their old gang ! They can have their old fiddler ! They can have their old picnic too ! I'll give them back their money. And I hope to Almighty God it'll pour rain on them ! "

" Oh, Josie," he sniffed, " won't there be no picnic ? "

" And thunder," she sobbed louder and louder. " Thunder and forked lightning."

" Josie," he snivelled, " I wants a picnic."

"And the anger of God to strike them all dead!" hissed Josie bitterly through her tears.

She snubbed the gang. She gave them back their money. For a week she carried round a broken heart. On Sunday the pain became almost unendurable. She had sworn to avoid the field, but she couldn't. From the Cemetery Road where she was walking with Jackie she descended by a steep path to the river. There she heard the fiddle playing and everything came up once more in a flood of tears. She crept along the hedge to a spot from which she could see them, at least in part. All she did see was Madge Mahoney's dress, but it was enough.

"Stop crying, Josie!" said her brother.

"I can't," she moaned. "Me life is over. There's me thanks for all I done for them, all the trouble I had with the picnic and keeping the money and everything!"

Every step she took away from them seemed a step nearer her grave. She went up the road, partly from an almost unconscious intention to return when they were emerging and scorch them with a look. But when she did return they had gone; the field was deserted; a gold-brown cloudy evening had foundered in a drift of silver among the darkening leaves, and the river shone coldly beneath it.

When she reached home she found a letter awaiting her. Her heart leaped. It was from the Fiddler. In it he confessed that he was unhappy without her. He was sorry if he had hurt her; he had never meant to, and he would not have spoken like that to anyone else; it was only that a cross word sounded so nasty from a young girl of her Beautiful and Tranquil Disposition. There were other things, too, which she did not understand about the Purity of his Affection. Nor did they worry her. The great thing was that her ascendancy had been triumphantly re-established, and that Sore-Eyes Donegan had got a smack on the kisser.

On the following Sunday when she re-appeared he presented her with a lily.

"May you be always as pure as you are now!" he said.

Josie took the lily round to show the neighbours, and utilised the occasion to solicit subscriptions for the picnic. The Widow Crowley, who kept the little shop, gave a penny, but warned them against the Fiddler. And being the managing sort she was, she spread the warning, and each and all the children were instructed by their parents to avoid him.

At once the Fiddler became a secret, a conspiracy; in Josie's eyes her secret, her conspiracy; but it was Madge Mahoney,



the slyboots, who had the inspiration. "Maybe," she said, "if Josie Mangan asked him, he'd come on the Picnic?"

The very thought made Josie crimson with delight. That would set her seal forever on the gang. Further, it would make every other gang hide its head, for never in anyone's memory had a gang taken a real fiddler with them on their picnic.

On the eve of the picnic, Josie and Kitty Donegan went into town to make the purchases. The market was crowded and the two girls pushed and shouldered their way excitedly about. Oranges fivepence a dozen, red apples fourpence ha'penny, russets threepence—they could bring themselves to buy nothing till they had handled the wares on every stall over and over again. Josie measured an orange with her fingers and then pushed her way, perspiring through the crowd, with her hand held in position to try another by.

"Almighty God," she prayed, with closed eyes, "grant we get sweet ones! Oh, Almighty God, I'd be disgraced forever if they were sour!"

She scarcely slept that night. Four or five times she rose and looked out at the sky.

"Almighty God," she kept repeating in a fever, "grant 'twill be fine! Oh, Almighty God, wouldn't it be awful if it rained?"

But it didn't rain. The morning broke cloudless and sunny and all the bells of the city were ringing joyfully. And there at the foot of the bed were the oranges and apples, russet and gold, a battered-tin kettle, rescued from an ashbin, a teapot without a handle and two tin mugs. She sprang out of bed, dressed and ran downstairs, hot and sick with sleeplessness. Going into the kitchen she had a sudden feeling of giddiness, her head spun and she staggered. Mrs. Geney who cooked the meals for them looked round in surprise.

"What's wrong?" she asked.

"Nothing," replied Josie sulkily.

Her father looked up from his newspaper.

"Now, mind ye," he said sternly, "look after yourself and Jackie. Don't sit in the sun. Don't go running under cars. Don't go too near the water. Don't eat too much of them apples or you'll be sick."

"I'm going to go swimming," said Jackie. Josie kicked him viciously under the table.

"You are not going to go swimming," said his father. "I'll flake the flaring divil out of you if I find you go swimming. And don't go sliding and tearing the seat out of your pants. And

don't go near any stream or running water. And don't play hurley. Sit down quietly in the shade and enjoy yourself."

Mrs. Geney laid a boiled egg before Josie. Then she put a rough palm under her chin.

"Look up at me," she said.

Josie obeyed.

"I thought so."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Mangan.

"Do you see anything?"

"N-n-o." He looked at Josie critically through his spectacles.

"I see spots," said Mrs. Geney.

"Lord God," said Josie, beginning to sniff, "'twould be like you to see something."

She had always disliked Mrs. Geney.

"You go back to bed till the nurse sees you, my lady."

"I wo' not," said Josie. "They'll be up for me in a minute. She can see me as I am."

"Do what you're told now!" replied Mrs. Geney.

Josie began to weep.

"Lord God, ever since you came into the house there's some misfortune down atop of me," she moaned, climbing the stairs again. "I wish to God I was dead and buried some place I'd be far away from you. . . . Will you tell that old Crowley one to come quick, so?" she cried with a sudden change of tone. "I'll be late for the train with you."

She was scarcely undressed before the first of the gang was in her room. Sobbing, Josie recounted what had happened. A few minutes more and the whole mob were assembled about their fallen chief. All declared they could see no spots whatever. Josie had a mirror and kept glancing at herself in it. Then the Widow Crowley arrived, big-boned and cheerful and bossy.

"I'll give her something to make the spots come out," she declared.

"But I'm all right, Mrs. Crowley," cried Josie angrily.

"Of course you're all right, child."

"But I'll be late for the train with you."

"You can go by another."

"What's the next?"

"Twelve," said Kitty Donegan.

"Lord God," said Josie, "I'm cursed!"

"We'll wait for you, Josie," said Kitty with sudden magnanimity.

"Will ye?"

"We will," said the gang in resigned and melancholy tones.

"I'll come back in an hour or so and then we'll know," said the Widow.

Camped on and about the bed, the gang discussed the many miseries caused them by the Widow. But Josie shook her head.

"'Tisn't her at all I blame," she declared. "'Tisn't her at all, but the bloody one downstairs." She shook her fist in the direction of the door.

"Kitty," she called in a feeble voice a moment later.

"Well?"

"Is there any spots now?"

"Naw," replied Kitty with broad contempt.

"'Tis all a plot of that one downstairs," said Josie. "Lord God, don't I know it? She's plotting this for months to spite me. No one knows what I suffered with her since me ma died. Oh, I wonder me ma's ghost don't haunt her!"

"It might yet," said Madge Mahoney hopefully.

"That it might! That it might haunt her till she dies, raving mad! That's my prayer. . . . Madge, do you see spots?"

"Erra, no!"

"'Tis a plot!"

"The train is gone," said Peter Murphy with a sigh. And this reduced them all to silence. When the Widow returned Josie was vomiting and declaring frantically that she would be grand now.

Sorrowfully the gang took over the funds from her. Sorrowfully they shared out her portion of oranges and apples and sweets and buns. She lay there, sobbing, too miserable even to dispute. All day she thought of them, of the beach, of the Fiddler, her fiddler, who now, careless of her fate, was playing to them. All day she sobbed without ceasing. And at night she was lying in a long hospital ward that went up and down before her incredulous eyes like the deck of a ship. She thought hospitals at least should be kept still.

It was months before she was released. Summer was over, the days were drawing in. Of the Fiddler there was no further news; the gang had been remiss and for weeks had deserted their fortress. Maybe he had tired of waiting. Josie visited the field when the leaves were falling; she visited it three times before she realised that all was over. The Fiddler was gone.



# ART

## THE NATIONAL GALLERY AGAIN

The monthly articles on Art in IRELAND TO-DAY are always interesting and stimulating. They are vigorous and aggressive at times, but these qualities can be healthy—to a point. The article, however, on the National Gallery in the November issue prompts me to the following remarks, for I fear that its disparaging tone will create a false impression of an institution that is one of the finest of our national possessions.

In referring to the new acquisitions to the Gallery, three pictures are dismissed as “gap fillers” in a tone suggesting that they are, therefore, rather contemptible. One of these pictures, referred to as Dutch, is incidentally by a German painter and a Berthe Morisot is somewhat grudgingly acceptable. No mention is made of the large Gentileschi, which would probably also be regarded as a place filler. Two 15th-century Austrian primitives are not mentioned at all.

As to the summary dismissal of the individual pictures, your correspondent is quite entitled not to like them and even to discredit them, but he is not on such safe ground with his remark that “the diversity of the works bought indicates no visible continuity of either taste or purpose.” Admittedly at a casual glance this conclusion is understandable, but one expects an art critic to look deeper. I suggest that he, himself, has actually mentioned the set purpose in the purchases, namely, to “gap fill.”

The ideal in any National (in the sense of belonging to the Nation—not Nationalist) Gallery I have ever visited, or whose catalogue I have studied, would appear to be to give as complete a representation as possible of pictorial art from its early beginnings in all countries and ages. In other words a National Gallery is a collection of International works of art. A Gallery specialising in branches or periods of Art, whether of National or Foreign origin, involves the neglect of wide and important fields. Such a Gallery would be useless for the broad purpose specified above. I submit, therefore, that the continuous purpose of our National Gallery should be, and is, to acquire good and representative examples of the greatest number of schools of painting possible. In Lady Gregory's “Life of Sir Hugh Lane,” we read that in 1914 he was “going to give an important Gainsborough landscape and some good pictures to *fill important gaps* in the collection”—so that over 20 years ago the policy of the Gallery Director was to gap fill. Today the Gallery continues to do so—Surely this is continuity of purpose. The mixed lot of gap fillers added recently to our collection are in complete harmony with this ideal.

As a matter of fact, considering the limited funds at its disposal, our collection is surprisingly representative of the history of European painting. In some branches it is particularly strong and takes high rank amongst the National Galleries of the world, many of which are extremely wealthy. Undeniably, criticisms could be levelled at the Gallery on the score of the hanging and

arrangement of the collections, but I understand that an attempt is being made to rectify this at present. We are then told that the Gallery has no character. What is meant by this is not clear. "Anglo-Irish" Society is blamed for it, and also for the aloofness and consequent freezing out of visitors. He cannot have heard of the Directors' recent broadcast and mention of the present comparatively satisfactory attendance figures—an average of 102 per day. While he blames the "Anglo-Irish" for the sparse attendance, he tells us that similar unsatisfactory attendance is experienced in other countries "with vast resources in wealth who ardently desire to elevate their people and offer every possible inducement to entice them."

It is no function of the Gallery to make people interested in Art—that surely is for the Educational authorities, or perhaps the Department of Industry and Commerce can help by making the country prosperous and so creating a leisured and art loving class. As to the statement that attendants dogged the visitors' footsteps through the Gallery—judging by the mutilation suffered by pictures recently in our Municipal Gallery for want of adequate supervision, it would seem to be only too necessary. Here again our Gallery is no exception, for strict supervision is the rule in every Gallery in the world. In one New York Gallery, the visitor must keep moving, and is not allowed to stand, even for a moment.

Having read the concluding paragraph of the article, I am at a loss to know what is meant by the statement that the Gallery is now as alien as the day it was handed to us. Its present personnel is certainly not alien—quite the reverse in fact. Incidentally, if the Gallery, with its wonderful stock of treasures is to be proclaimed as another wrong inflicted on us by the Saxon Yoke—well, as a Nationalist, I can only regret that England did not do us a few more wrongs of a like character.

The Institution "could be brought into harmony with a general scheme," it continues, but what is the scheme, no matter how national, into which the Gallery as it is to-day would not fit? It is a Gallery of International Art, and as such it could and should take its place in any National plan. If we are to produce a worthy native school of painting, we must learn from the discoveries and traditions of the great schools of all nations and ages, which can be seen and studied in Merrion Square. By learning the lesson of these paintings, we can acquire knowledge and powers to express our National Character, Soul and Ideals. Thus only can the great National School of Irish painting which we all desire, be born to endure.

EDWARD A. MCGUIRE

## REPLY TO THE FOREGOING

These comments on last month's references to the National Gallery, in spite of a serious misquotation, seem very largely to confirm the views then advanced.

Mr. McGuire agrees that the Morisot is a good picture, and that the others were acquired to fill gaps in an historical sequence. Moreover, he makes no extravagant claims for them, beyond the rather ambiguous statement that they are good and representative examples. He contends very reasonably that the principle underlying such acquisitions is a good one. His ideal of a picture gallery is not only defensible, it is orthodox, and while, in view of local circumstances, it is not mine, the divergence of opinion, so far, can hardly explain a certain acrimony which is noticeable in his remarks.

When we turn, however, to the larger issues involved, it becomes plain that Mr. Maguire and the writer set out from such entirely different premises that agreement on anything except the weather is unlikely. He does not consider it any part of the duties of the National Gallery to elevate public taste. He would not think it the duty of this or any similar institution—even of one subsidised by the State—to subserve National aims. These beliefs faithfully reflect the attitude of the Gallery. And in the distinction Mr. Maguire draws between the words “National” and “Nationalist” he further illuminates that attitude. It is only in subject countries the words are different. The term “English Nationalist” or “French Nationalist” would convey nothing to an Englishman or a Frenchman. The English National Gallery would not *repudiate* the title Nationalist, it would merely think the last syllable redundant. And when Mr. Maguire, on behalf of the Dublin Gallery, disclaims the title “Nationalist” it is because he is conscious that the Institution is, at best, detached from the national aspirations of his fellow Irishmen.

Finally, the appalling suggestion that the Department of Industry and Commerce might help by increasing the country’s prosperity “and so creating a leisured and art-loving class,” while no doubt partly jocose, yet expresses a mentality which only too accurately represents the National Gallery.

It should be unnecessary to protest that there was no intention of saddling the new Director, whose activity and zeal are unprecedented, with any responsibility for what is undesirable in the Gallery. As a fact (in strict confidence) the Morisot was credited to him as it was obviously secured because somebody liked it, and the rest were attributed to the unimaginative tradition of the collection. For Dr. Furlong is not a dictator, he is responsible to a Board, and I would wager my last Pig (a noble coin, closely associated with the National Gallery) that the constitution of that Board, whether by appointment, co-option, or what you will, ensures for it a continuity of complexion which makes it almost hereditary.

JOHN DOWLING

#### APROPOS OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY

MR. JOHN DOWLING’S article on the National Gallery in the November issue of IRELAND TO-DAY has set my pen flying over the paper as it has not flown since the good days when I used to bait poor Æ in the columns of his own



*Irish Statesman*. It is not, however, to try and bait Mr. Dowling I write now. I am much too gratified to find a Dublin review devoting space to the National Gallery to want to do anything but help, so far as I am able, and may, to elucidate the meaning of the Gallery for young Irish minds interested. Coming up from the country over twenty years ago with an eager, if youthfully ignorant, mind, I myself had to work out the meaning of the Gallery and its contents. In those days the copies of the Raphael Cartoons were on view. I was perplexed by them. But since then Raphael Cartoons have often been a comfort, once, for instance, in a rather overpowering visit to the Elysée Palace in Paris. And in London I have, on occasion, found that I preferred to spend half an hour amongst the Raphael Cartoons at South Kensington than with famous men. Pictures can come to mean as much as that in a man's life.

But first a correction :

"The Louvre and other Parisian galleries," Mr. Dowling says, "are deserted except in the tourist season." That really is an exaggeration. In over six years' residence in Paris I must have visited the Louvre five hundred times if I visited it once. It is so vast that I dare not claim to know the contents as well as I know those of the Dublin Gallery. But I do know them very well, and I found that I was only able to get to know them well by going to the Gallery between noon and two o'clock, when Paris was at lunch. I do not think that I was ever once alone in even the remotest and smallest room, not even in the dull English rooms or in that short passage at the junction of the Flemish and Dutch *cabinets*, where a series of four fifteenth-century Catalan panels of the history of Saint George (the patron saint of Catalonia as of England and Russia) are always waiting to give the uninitiated visitor a final knock-out—just when he thinks he has come to the end of France's un-insular and all-embracing appreciation of the beautiful achievements of other peoples. I never saw the Long Gallery or the great gallery of French pictures that runs parallel with it on the north side, without considerable numbers of people. On Sundays, when admission is free—on week-days one has to pay two francs—resident foreigners and experienced tourists stay away altogether because of the crush of people, mostly belonging to the "petit peuple," working men with their wives, clerks, conscripts, etc., people who cannot go to the Gallery during the week. In short, my experience suggested that to the French masses, the Louvre is a kind of glorification of what "the room at the back of the shop" is to the small shopkeeper all over the world—a place where they go to meditate amongst and upon the precious things they have themselves collected and still cherish. That was the atmosphere of the beautiful palace of the kings of France as I knew it. I think it no surprise therefore that present-day French art is so much alive. The French—when I say the French I mean of course that element of the population, an unusually large element in all classes in France, which cares for the fine arts—the French know up and down and backwards and forwards, what the dead could do. That is one of the reasons why there is

a more eager interest there than in more Bœotian countries where the fine arts are uncomprehended or only dully comprehended, in what living artists have to say, in judging whether it is as true for its time as the work of the great dead was for their time. It is not for nothing that Paris has been for a thousand years the cultural capital of western Europe.

In Ireland we do not, for the most part, know anything about dead artists. How then should we be competent to judge the living? Our perceptions are untrained or only very partially trained. There may be a change since, but when I was a student in Dublin I never met anybody from University College or Trinity College or Maynooth, or even from the School of Art, in the National Gallery. One Dublin painter has told me that in four years at the School of Art he could not remember ever being advised to visit the National Gallery, and only stumbled on it by accident. Nor did I ever hear pictures discussed amongst students. No Latinist studying Ovid was interested in what Nicolas Poussin had to say about Thetis and Peleus, no divinity student in what El Greco made of the character of Saint Francis of Assisi. No student of Italian literature wanted to know what Titian had to say about Baldassare Castiglione, no student of political history what James Barry could tell him about Edmund Burke. Yet it is not Reynolds's soft nothings in paint but Barry's austere statement that explains the genius whom God had created a great-hearted humanitarian and who in his old age became the shoddy philosopher of militant reaction. Tom Moore in his gentler way explains it in his diary. Burke was in the same position as the girl in the song, "The want of money, sure, left him behind," more especially in the most plutocratic city in the world of his time. And after a long and heroic fight, he had at last to knuckle under. It is the London-Irish tragedy in heroic terms. And it is all in the Barry portrait.

Nor, so far as I know, did any republican student in college ever inquire why the beautiful death-mask of Tone—it is like a Beethoven *adagio*—was not reproduced and made generally known, or ask what it could tell him of the first modern Irishman. Contact with the minds of Poussin and El Greco and Titian and Barry and the unknown sculptor could have enriched those young minds for life, but their teachers had not given them even an approach to the great artist's works.

This brings me to another point—Mr. Dowling's animadversions on the Anglo-Irish founders of our National Gallery.

"It was designed . . ." he says, ". . . with sub-conscious malice to discourage any interest in the arts amongst the plain people . . . was meant for the leisured classes and is only open to the public when the public is at work."

Though I am all for having the Gallery open as long as possible, I think Mr. Dowling's statement is much too sweeping. At the time the Gallery was founded, no gallery in the world was open except during the day. I believe the Russian galleries are now open in the evening, and for the last two years the

English National Gallery has been open until eight o'clock on three evenings a week. But all over Europe, galleries closed, and still close, early—the Uffizzi shuts at three o'clock on week-days, and at one o'clock on Sundays—and it costs five lire to go in except on Sundays. (It used to cost twelve lire—three shillings—when I knew it first, though the Electress Anna Maria dei Medici left it “to posterity” which ought to mean that one pays nothing—so much for the people's access to their own property in Italy!) The idea of having picture galleries open at night is a specifically twentieth-century and revolutionary idea. And it has to be said for the Anglo-Irish that they gave Dublin the most splendidly representative gallery in any town of the size in Europe, even including Italy, where there is very little that is not Italian.

After all, the Anglo-Irish are a very great race. They only just failed to do the work they were sent to Ireland to do, that of anglicizing us. (Looking round at the mid-Victorian English provincialism of our press and our cultural institutions, Gaelic as well as English-speaking, I incline to wonder whether we dare say that they have, in fact, failed in that work). And the Anglo-Irish did one thing that neither the native English nor the native Irish have been able to do, create and maintain over two hundred and fifty years, from Congreve to Lennox Robinson, a tradition of high comedy that is not surpassed in any literature except French. It is from that tradition, not from the bucolic farces of Great William of the overblown reputation, that modern Irish comedy as well as modern English comedy and modern American comedy derive. Again, is not Jack Yeats, an Anglo-Irishman by origin, the first great painter who, instead of painting Castle officials and Trinity dons at a hundred pounds or five hundred pounds a time, set himself like an Irish Gustave Courbet, to paint the land and the people he knew and loved in all their poetry, grave and gay, under-dog but most un-bourgeois? I think we must allow that, especially for such a numerically small race, the Anglo-Irish stand extraordinarily high in the matter of artistic achievement. Some Anglo-Irish families may have failed Dublin and Ireland. The Sligos gave the fragments of the Treasury of Atreus from Mycenae to the British Museum when the British Museum was already positively lousy with Greek art and Dublin had next to none. Sir William Gregory bequeathed a Velazquez to the English National Gallery though it already had three or four and Dublin had, and still has, none. The late Lord Iveagh bequeathed all his pictures to England—though this matters not quite so much for they were, as it happened, mostly English pictures of which we already have too many, considering the slight merits of the English School in comparison with any of the Continental schools. But there were other Anglo-Irishmen who were more understanding and of whom the Earl of Milltown, Lord Cloncurry and Sir Hugh Lane are only the best-known. They—surely not out of sub-conscious malice—made the Dublin Gallery richer in good pictures than any other gallery in these islands outside of London. Great cities like Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow, three and four times the size and twenty



times as rich as Dublin, are nothing like as well-off for Italian, French, Spanish, Flemish and Dutch pictures as we are. Nor did the Scottish nobility, even with a wealthy royal family living, so to speak, "up the glen," and ready to be synpathetic, make Scotland's National Gallery in Edinburgh as fine as ours.

Perhaps an old prejudice against the Gallery because the "representatives of the people" had so little to do with its foundation still survives. A north of Ireland graduate of the National University once asked me seriously whether all the pictures in Merrion Square were not copies!\*

And when, reading *On Another Man's Wound*, I came on the remark that the author found "a few" good pictures to look at in the National Gallery, I wished I had him near me so that I could give battle! Some day I shall fight that battle with Mr. O'Malley. "I dar' him," now that he is older and a fine artist himself, to say that our Gallery has not literally hundreds of pictures by great artists of all the schools.

It is the Anglo-Irish we have to thank for that. Mr. Dowling suggests that there is evidence of a lack of policy in recent activities at the Gallery. If there is, it is good that he should draw attention to it. Perhaps, in another article, he will outline what he considers would be a good working policy. To myself, it seems evident that, apart from the questions of opening over longer hours and seeing to the urgent question of having reproductions of the pictures available at a low price, what is most necessary is first of all having the Hone Bequest exhibited, next the re-arrangement and expansion of the Irish room, and the purchase of more Irish pictures. The Irish artists of the past are very inadequately represented. Surely the owner of Barry's *Venus Anadyomene* would have sold it to the Gallery years ago if they had wanted it? It is a very fine picture and the fact that Barry has been out of fashion in England for a hundred years is no reason for not having a representative selection of his works in the National Gallery of his own country. There was a time when Poussin was out of fashion in England. But England knows better now as it will know better about Barry later on. Surely, again, it is absurd that on the opinion of one solitary English critic the Gallery authorities have allowed the name of Paolo Uccello to be withdrawn from the two magnificent panels of *The Battle of Pisa* and *The Battle of Anghiari*? They had always passed for Uccellos, even with Hugh Lane. And I was myself the first person in four hundred and fifty years to discover that Paul of the Birds had, in his whimsical way, interwoven his initials into the embroideries on one of the horses. Look and see!

After the Irish exhibits, which are, I suggest, the most urgent problem at the gallery, it should be the turn of the modern French. It seems incredible that a picture considered by Bryan of the Dictionary as one of the finest works

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\* Actually there are relatively fewer copies in Dublin than in most galleries, and those that are there are of considerable artistic interest. The Signorelli *Flagellation*, scarcely inferior to the original in the Brera, and generally considered to be almost contemporary with it, is the best-known. The Correggio *Saint Catherine* is another. The Titian *Supper at Emmaus* is not a copy, but a School version of the beautiful picture in the Louvre, and it has some reflection of the subdued glow of the original.

of Jacques Louis David should be allowed to rot in the cellars ! Incredible that a fine French Primitive *Pietà* with side panels should for years have been left hanging unprotected over the fire in the Director's room, with the paint peeling slowly off ! Incredible that there should be no Ingres, that there should be only one small Delacroix, no Courbet, no Cézanne, no Manet. . . .

But whatever criticisms may be levelled against it, and whatever the lacunae, the gallery has enough as it stands to provide interest and stimulus, not for classes or masses, but for those persons of all classes who are ready and apt to derive intellectual profit from pictorial art. It is for them I should like to see Mr. Dowling writing, for them, and, more especially, for the potential writers amongst them. Modern Irish writing—an extraordinary thing in a mainly Catholic country—is almost entirely devoid of a visual sense. And yet the greatest writing has always owed a great deal to painting, as the greatest painting owes a great deal to literature. When oil painting was invented in Flanders, France was fighting the Hundred Years War, but the French *Mystères* and *Miracles* of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries inspired much of the work of the Flemish painters (Bosch, almost alone, turning to Germany and *The Ship of Fools*). And it was from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* that the great classical painters of the Renaissance took most of their subjects. Keats on the other hand, got "Bacchus and his pards" from Titian and his "Magic casements" from Claude Lorraine. It may be through painting that an unprovincial Irish mind will come into being. We must take cognisance of what is happening, or of what has happened, in the world outside. All great cultures have drawn inspiration from the cultures of other nations. But from many, not from one only—that way lies only further provincialism. England is only a few hours away from Dublin. That we know. But what we do not all know is that the whole of Western Europe is articulate in Merrion Square. It is telling us—if we would but listen !

THOMAS MCGREEVY

## DR. WALTER GROPIUS

### *"The International Trend of Modern Architecture."*

THE large and representative audience which assembled to hear the eminent German architect, Dr. Walter Gropius, on "The International Trend of Modern Architecture" may be regarded as an encouraging omen for the future of architecture in Ireland, consisting as it did of so many of those successful architects whose life-work has been a negation of everything that Gropius stands for, sitting side-by-side with those of the younger generation who are faced with the thankless task of undoing the harm done by their elders. It was especially encouraging, however, because it included so many of those cultured laymen upon whom, in the ultimate resource, the renaissance of Irish architecture depends. The only cause for regret is that it was not more representative of

the ecclesiastical authorities, whose influence is so powerful and so valuable in any cultural activity and upon whom rests so much responsibility for the standard of Irish architecture to-day. A conservatism which confines the choice of architects for ecclesiastical work to a small coterie of eclectics is neither in the best interests of the Church, nor of art and is sadly out of keeping with the history of a body which, in the past, has been accustomed to employ the most sincere and progressive artists of the day. With this proviso, the audience assembled by the Architectural Association of Ireland on Tuesday, Nov. 10th, may be considered quite worthy of their distinguished guest.

The remarks of some speakers at the conclusion of the lecture lead me to believe that certain aspects of Dr. Gropius's thesis may have been misunderstood, if not by the speakers themselves, possibly by those who heard them. I would like, therefore, to refer to the text of the lecture and to emphasise certain sections of it.

If there was one point that the lecturer laid great stress upon it was the *intellectual basis* of the New Architecture. If he mentioned outward forms it was only to insist that these are not the whims of a handful of architects avid for innovation, but simply the inevitable product of the intellectual, social and technical conditions of our age. Furthermore, he stigmatised as the worst enemy of the New Architecture the fact that 'modern' architecture became fashionable, with the result that formalistic imitation and snobbery distorted the fundamental truth and simplicity on which the renaissance was based. Under this condemnation would come most of those buildings in this country which are usually called 'modern'—most of our new shops and cinemas and the startling concoctions of misguided speculative builders. Genuine examples of the New Architecture are in Ireland much rarer than most people imagine, and the number of practising architects completely in sympathy with the movement could probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. "The movement," says Dr. Gropius, "must be purged from within if its original aims are to be saved from the strait-jacket of materialism and false slogans inspired by plagiarism or misconception. Catch phrases like 'functionalism' and fitness for purpose—'beauty' have had the effect of deflecting appreciation of the New Architecture into external channels or making it purely one-sided. This is reflected in a very general ignorance of the true motives of its founders: an ignorance which impels superficial minds, who do not perceive that the New Architecture is a bridge uniting opposite poles of thought, to relegate it to a single circumscribed province of design. For instance rationalization, which many people imagine to be its cardinal principle, is really only its purifying agency. The liberation of architecture from a welter of ornament, the emphasis on its structural functions and the concentration on concise and economical solutions, represent the purely material side of that formalizing process on which the *practical* value of the New Architecture depends. The other, the aesthetic satisfaction of the human soul, is just as important as the



material. Both find their counterpart in that unity which is life itself. What is far more important than this structural economy and its functional emphasis is the intellectual achievement which has made possible a new spatial vision. For whereas building is merely a matter of methods and materials, architecture implies the mastery of space.

The New Architecture is not just "a new style." If one uses the word *style* as one might refer to an admirable quality in a tennis-player's technique, one finds such "stylish" characteristics in the best buildings of all periods. If one speaks of *designing in a style* as a term of reproach applicable to the work of those architects who pretend to design Gothic churches and Georgian houses, one finds nothing so false or so futile in the New Architecture. If, again, one thinks of *style* as the common denominator of the buildings of a period, one must perforce leave its discovery to historians. Definitely, then, the New Architecture cannot be "a new style." Furthermore, nothing could have been more remote from the aims of its progenitors.

Speaking of his famous school of architecture and architectonic arts, the Bauhaus at Dessau, Dr. Gropius insisted: "The object of the Bauhaus was not to propagate any 'style,' system, dogma, formula, or vogue, but simply to exert a revitalizing influence on design. We did not base our teaching on any preconceived ideas of form, but sought the vital spark behind life's ever-changing forms. . . . A 'Bauhaus Style' would have been a confession of failure and a return to that very stagnation and devitalizing inertia which I had called it into being to combat."

Finally, could one do better than quote his inspiring conclusion?

"No one who has explored the sources of the movement I have called the New Architecture can possibly subscribe to the claim that it is based on an anti-traditional obsession for mechanistic technique *qua* mechanistic technique, which blindly seeks to destroy all deeper national loyalties and is doomed to lead to the deification of pure materialism. My conception of the New Architecture is nowhere and in no sense in opposition to 'Tradition' properly so-called. "Respect for Tradition" does not mean the complacent toleration of elements which have been a matter of fortuitous chance or of individual eccentricity; nor does it mean the acceptance of domination by bygone aesthetic forms. It means, and always has meant, the preservation of essentials in the process of striving to get at what lies at the back of all materials and every technique, by giving semblance to the one with the intelligent aid of the other. The ethical necessity of the New Architecture can no longer be called in doubt. And the proof of this—if proof were still needed—is that in all countries Youth has been fired with its inspiration."

JOHN O'GORMAN

(see page 69)

## MUSIC

### CELEBRITY CONCERT : THEATRE ROYAL

Eide Norena (Soprano), Alfredo Tomasini (Baritone), Goluboff (Violinist).

Miss Norena's programme was as follows:—Handel's *Ritorna O Cara*, Schubert's *Die Post*, and *Wohin?*, Liszt's *Oh, quand je dors*, and Verdi's *Ah fors e liu*. Doubtless she was at her best in the operatic number, but one was continually conscious therein of the necessity for orchestral accompaniment. In spite of this, one was glad to hear this somewhat "hackneyed" aria sung so well and to note how great an artist was Verdi who subordinated apparently undisciplined coloratura to his emotional requirements. The number I liked best was Schubert's "*Die Post*," where singer and pianist contributed their just quota to a most satisfactory performance. The singer paid great care to line and tone in the Handel number; but might we not have had a little more emotional stress? I sometimes think that singers have a tendency to approach Handel as if he were a holy person, to stylize him and rate him "respectable." It would be hateful to see his great soul plumbing the depths of respectability. Tomasini is the possessor of a fine quality voice and also of the ability to use it. His best song was *Du bist so jung* of Erick Wolff—I shall not easily forget the singing of "und ich, O Gott, ich bin so stein." I would have been glad to hear Lalo's *Anbade* in any other part of the programme—coming after the deep seriousness of the German group one could not really believe in this gentleman's decease in a nice major cantalile movement. Tomasini did with the song whatever could be done with it. However, here was a singer with superb diction, rhythmic security, and technique—(one remembers his *descrecendo* at the end of Hageman's "*Do not go, my love*") and if his top register under pressure did not always afford unalloyed pleasure, one forgot this and came away with the remembrance of artistry.

It was rather difficult to assess the purely musical ability of Goluboff, the boy violinist, as his programme made technical rather than musical demands upon him. These demands he met fairly in Sarasate's *Jota*, Ravel's *Habanera*, and Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No. 1*. The same might be said of Mozart's *Rondo in G*, although some rather enthusiastic double fortes roughened the tone; and even if the full poetic content of the second subject was not realized, it would be churlish to deny him the meed of praise that his undoubted technical proficiency warrants. Reginald Paul was an excellent accompanist.

A final word of praise is due the promoters for those excellent programmes.

ÉAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

### ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY'S RECITALS

The Prague String Quartette.

It is hardly necessary to write words of praise about this quartette—the quality of their performance being so well known; but one would like to say that the first violin never plays with anything but true intonation. Men have been awarded medals and honours for feats much less rare. If I came away

disappointed from the recital it was because I went to hear great music well played and received certain music well played.

The first number was a Jan Zach (1773) Quartette in A Major. There is no doubt that this quartette displayed to advantage the virtues of the ensemble—delicate technical work, fine rhythm and vitality—the lay-out of each of the four movements being crystal clear. But in spite of this I think the quartette was, musically speaking, hardly worth the attention of such a combination. Having heard the early German formulae as vitalized by the genius of Haydn and Mozart, I felt that I was being cheated of the best in being made listen to the same formulae in the hands of Jan Zach.

The second number was Quartette No. 2 (*Confidential Letters*) by Leos Janacek, receiving its third public performance. This was of course "modern," with all the implications of that much-abused word. The weakness of the quartette to me was that it was programme music—in the sense that its emotional content seemed to be dictated from the outside, rather than being an inherent implication in the body of the music; and as the listener had no clue to the nature of the governing programme, the final implications of the work were not understood. At any rate so it was with myself. Technically the work bristles with difficulties which put it beyond the abilities of any ensemble not possessing the technique of the Prague Quartette.

The third quartette was the C. Minor Op. 51 of Brahms which received its due meed of consideration.

Mr. John Hunt commenced his piano recital with the Schumann Fantasia Op. 17. It was interesting to note in such an early work Schumann's strange constructional rigidity—that eternal four bars plus four bars or two plus two. I am not saying that Schumann never wrote five or seven bar-phrases, but that he lacks the subtlety of construction which was part of the normal equipment of his peers. However, the memory of the work was blotted out by the Haydn Sonata in E flat. The full content of the Sonata cannot be realized on a modern grand-piano which imparts to it a spurious chromium-plated finish—but the craftsmanship, the verve and the vitality of it were apparent and were duly enjoyed.

Mr. Hunt uses his piano judiciously, even at its greatest weight, his tone never becomes that jangle of wires one sometimes hears. Emotional restraint, delicate nuancing, and good quality tone might be said to be the virtues of this pianist, but a habit of increasing basic speed in rapid passage-work had the effect of putting the main lines of the work out of focus. This was particularly noticeable in the Haydn Sonata, where, too, such passage-work was blurred by a slight overweight of left-hand tone.

The Pasquier Trio commenced its recital with the String Trio, Op. 9, of Beethoven. For this performance my position in the hall seemed to be admirably suited, and I must record the great pleasure I received from the Pasquier Trio. If I must be critical, I would like to say that I thought the



Scherzo too fast, and that once or twice for fleeting moments the cello contributed more than its just share of tone to the ensemble—but I shall remember the delicacy and precision of this performance.

An interesting contribution was a trio by Jean Cras—particularly interesting perhaps to Irish listeners, now that we are rapidly becoming conscious of the desirability of some musical expression of modern Ireland. I do not know this composer, presumably modern French, and had only this one opportunity of hearing his work, but its main interest for me lay in the fact that I seemed to see the basis of the work lying in folk music. Strangely enough the folk idiom suggested was Russian—in the *Lent* and *Animé* movements particularly there were suggestions of contacts with Rimsky—Korsakoff, Borodin and Moussorgsky, the *pizzicato* coda in the latter movement was somewhat barbaric, suggesting the European conception of Tartar music. The most startling of the movements to me was the last, "*Très animé*" which had for its first subject a theme so like an Irish jig as almost to be one. The Trio was beautifully played and satisfactorily ended a very pleasant recital.

ÉAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

#### BROADCAST SYMPHONY CONCERTS: THIRD OF SERIES

2RN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Conductor—Lieutenant Doyle.

Before dealing specifically with this concert, I would like to reiterate some of the statements made in recent issues of *IRELAND TO-DAY* by my confrere, Eamonn O Gallchobhair. It is not fair either to the music, conductor, orchestra or listeners to put up for critical assessment insufficiently rehearsed performances and the unfortunate critic, however kindly he feels, has either to be insincere or face the suspicion that he is but carping. I would like to bring to the notice of those responsible for the allocation of rehearsals that reminiscence of Sir Charles Hallé, who, in Leipzig, attended the daily rehearsals of an established symphony orchestra, where the only number rehearsed for three months was the *Eroica* symphony. At the end of this period the orchestra was reckoned to have some knowledge of the symphony. At our national broadcasting station, a "scratch" orchestra is expected to achieve this three months' work in three hours. This means bad art and bad economy as well.

A detailed criticism would sound so disheartening that I think it better to give a synopsis. Lack of clarity and vigour—lack of rehearsal—six-eight allegro opening speed increased in such measure as to render performance precarious—tensity on part of players—Allegretto played slower than this marking—haphazard opening—slowness plus rigidity—tranquillo line of clarinet solo, second subject, submerged by accompaniment—Scherzo, trumpets and tympani out of tune—tympani much too loud. Finale—strings weak and tame—lack of accent—impression of players counting their bars rather than being able to concentrate on playing them. Only satisfactory playing in this performance came from wood-wind section; whole performance characterized by lack of knowledge on part of players.

This is but a short synopsis of my notes. It has not been pleasant to write

them, and I make no attempt, under the circumstances of rehearsal, to apportion blame.

Owing to illness I was unable to hear the fourth concert of the series, featuring Schubert's great C Major symphony, conducted by Mr. Godfrey Brown.

J. J. DELAMERE

## DUBLIN PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY CONCERT

Conductor—Dr. Larchet.

This concert was given in the Metropolitan Hall, and laboured under this initial disadvantage that the hall is unsuitable for performances of this description, its acoustic propensities being described only by the word eccentric. But most of us were aware that it was a case of this hall or no performance.

The overture was Schubert's Rosamunde. In the introduction one would have liked a better quality oboe tone and from where I sat the violin tone sounded thin—the result being a rather unimaginative and workmanlike rendering. It was good to hear the allegro taken at its proper speed, so many conductors ruin this first subject by excessive speed; the second subject would have been improved if it had been possible to hold violins together. (The whole concert suffered from outbreaks of individualism on part of violins). On the whole the performance was fairly adequate, and that is as much as any conductor can achieve in Dublin at the moment.

Mannheimer. Here is a pianist who can play the stodgiest and driest music and infuse life into it by the power of his own imagination, and his fluent technique. I heard him a year ago at a Royal Dublin Society recital, where I and everybody else listened to him in sheer delight. The Philharmonic are to be congratulated on their choice of pianist and it was a sad reflection on Dublin's musical taste that the hall should be half empty. Mannheimer played the A flat major concerto of Field, the Irish composer. The concerto is rather "old-fashioned" in content, and in structure. The shadow of Clementi, Field's master, lies heavy upon it. Other solos by Mannheimer were beautifully played and enthusiastically received.

The symphony was the Clock in D by Haydn. Bad intonation on part of wind players generally tended to spoil the interpretation: for instance, a good spirited interpretation of the Minuet was marred by disagreement between horns and bassoons. The best movements were the first, where the tempo and general realization of content were good, though the violins committed some crimes in uncertain syncopated playing, and the Minuet. In the last movement we had some uneasy moments in the fugal section where rhythmic stability was impaired.

It should be noted that Ravel's Bolero, with its bizarre orchestration and its insistent rhythm received vociferous applause: it seems that the mere presence of these elements can rouse the enthusiasm of a Dublin audience.

Dr. Larchet must be complimented upon the musical results of this concert—his first appearance as permanent conductor of the Dublin Philharmonic Society.

J. J. DELAMERE

## THEATRE

### WILD GEESE—AND TAME

In the midst of the bickering between devotees of the Hidden Ireland and adherents to the Anglo-Irish tradition, the fact seems to be forgotten that some 80 per cent. of the Irish people form a Third Estate with no cultural tradition whatever apart from that acquired since Emancipation in 1832. To this Third Estate Gaels, and Anglo-Irish alike are cousins, not brothers as they should be, because it has been kept apart from both traditions and is incapable of understanding the background of either. It forms the bulk of our vocal Catholicism, lay and clerical, and its outlook and habits of thought were well stated last month in *IRELAND TO-DAY* (p. 77) by Mr. Thomas Fitzgerald, reviewing Ida Coudenhove's "The Burden of Belief," when he summarised the difficulties facing anyone of artistic sensibility here—"the ugliness of our Churches; the lack of charity and of intellect, the fanaticism of much of our Catholic press; the Jansenist tendencies of many of our clergy; the narrowness and lack of intellectual candour of many religious people; the prudery and insensibility of the middle classes; our lack of humour and our illiteracy; and above all and through all, our colossal feeling of inferiority, as Irishmen and even as Irish Catholics—all these things cannot fail to depress us, these things create rebels." All this, and especially the feeling of inferiority—usually manifested in blustering nationalism and semi-hysterical demonstrations of piety—arise from this lack of tradition and of native standards of taste and conduct which our history has forced on the Third Estate. The restoration or formation of these standards must be the main aim of every lover of this country, for the most urgent problem in Ireland to-day, influencing every side of national life, is this clouding of every issue with sentimental unrealities and evasion of fact, and especially the sheer lack of thinking that prevails amongst all classes, "bourgeois" and "proletariat." Until this is amended, art will be neither appreciated nor useful in this country, because it is too logical, too searching of mind and heart to please our prevailing taste. Here as always taste must follow artistic achievement. Probably this development will come only when the Third Estate itself throws up a spokesman who will use both the Anglo-Irish heritage of lovely style and the Gaelic capacity for deep feeling founded on clarity of thought, thereby setting a standard for later workers, and unifying all sections in a common self-respect. Had Pearse lived, he would probably have achieved this. For us, however, it remains to prepare the way.

Now our theatres can do much to foster progressive thought, if only by showing the actual state of affairs and pointing out its origins, and this lengthy preamble has arisen from the fact that every play I saw last month, with one exception, dealt directly with this question of bourgeois outlook. Thus G. B. Shaw's *Fanny's First Play* presents the outlook itself and a new generation's reaction to it, while the other Abbey show I saw, Teresa Deevy's new play,



*The Wild Goose*, gave us its origins here. Of the Gate's two shows, Laurence Housman's *Victoria Regina* presented the archetype of *bourgeoisie* in a manner that concealed much of its ugliness. The other Gate play, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, was illuminating if only by the contrast of its full blooded, Elizabethan, vitality and joy-in-life. Finally, the Comhar Dramuiochta gave us *Athbharra*, Miceal O Siochradha's fine Gaelic translation of T. C. Murray's *Aftermath*, where the sudden patch of English speech in Act 2 emphasised the gulf between the peasants and the town in a most vivid manner.

*Fanny's First Play* (producer Hugh Hunt, designer Tanya Moiseiwitsch) was great fun and stimulating too. Shaw's lectures and sly digs are so neat and such a pleasure to the mind that his message always gets home. He is the supreme propagandist because he accomplishes the difficult feat of "shaking your hand while stabbing you in the back." In this play, everything said of pre-war London applies doubly here, though the audience of course could not see the beam in its own eye. The production was very good, the settings admirable in combining taste with a suggested lack of it appropriate to the outlook concerned and the costumes were a delight—from Dora Delaney's amazing hat and costume, suggesting a mixture of pale-blue chiffon, very, very loud pyjama suiting, and a red flannel bolero to Mrs. Knox's so refined blue costume and Bobby Gilbey's pipestem trousers. The acting all round was very good, and what pleased me most, equally so—no one player really can be specially mentioned, though the play itself gave some better opportunities than others—notably Ria Mooney's delightfully perky, though rather indistinct Dora Delaney, J. Winter's very good Juggins, having just the right aloofness and poise, and Denis Johnston's marvellous Mons. Duvallet—his peroration on France's military glory and political stupidity being saved from tedium by admirable use of gesture and phrasing. Christine Hayden's Mrs. Knox, that so religious woman, was a fine study too, and so was Sheila Richards' crystalline Margaret. I have only one complaint to make, and that is that Messrs. Knox and Gilbey (W. O'Gorman and Fred Johnston respectively) were not at all English enough in speech and manner—but then, perhaps plastic surgery and engrafted larynxes would be needed and that would be a pity, because both are too pleasing as it is to justify such drastic alterations.

In *The Wild Goose*, another Hunt production, they formed a fine team, with excellent support from Ria Mooney as Eileen Connolly, whose vivid portrayal of this character was overshadowed at times by Ann Clery's lovely study of Hannah Power, a part apparently after her own heart. I was glad to be able to enjoy it along with her. Eric Gorman's Stephen Power was very good, but not modulated enough in speech, while Christine Hayden's Mary Kavanagh, a repetition of Mrs. Knox in type, failed through being too true to life. I, at least, felt a physical pain at times during the nagging she was so fond of, in common with every other elderly relative in the month's plays. Of the rest, only one man let down the play and that surprisingly badly—Frank Carney as

Father Ryan, which was as unfeeling a performance as I have seen for some time, due either to strain or to lack of insight. At any rate, there was little sympathy in my savage breast when he was shot in Act 2. I object to feeling vaguely that a player is constantly telling himself how good he is, and his character how superior a character *he* is—and Father Ryan was a *very* superior person.

The play itself is mainly a character study and Fred Johnson as Martin Shea gave a rendering that was a constant delight in its consistency, its variation of mood, and modulation of voice, its definitely bringing out of the conflict between a religious vocation, love of country, and love of woman which was maintained up to the last line, and gave the play its value as drama. The play clearly shows the conditions prevailing after the Treaty of Limerick and just prior to the enactment of the penal laws, conditions giving rise to our present hapless condition—the desolation and helplessness after the breakdown of the old culture (the remaining heritage of which, however, was not sufficiently shown) the lack of anything new to take its place, and the alien power ever ready to crush any attempt at recreating a real national life: all this in an indirect, objective way far more convincing than any amount of heroics of the “On to Boolavogue” variety. This is a “peasant drama” (*pace* Mr. Wall) of the right type, for it does not acquiesce in peasant conditions, but by glorifying them looks beyond them to fuller development. The production was very good indeed, showing close attention to detail, while the staging of the play was splendid—settings, costumes, and lighting being all finely suited to the play and the period. The settings especially were fine—permitting good groupings, effective entrances and realistic lighting effects. Apart from this, there was a dignity, a clarity of detail, and a proportion about them that made them the finest realistic creation Miss Moiseiwitsch has done yet, combining as they did imagination with realism.

*Victoria Regina* was very slight, being just a selection of talking magic lantern slides. Ann Clarke's Victoria was the main attraction, and a very real one—her acting all through was superb, though I thought her make-up very hard in the opening scenes. “Leading Strings” and “Intervention” were the best scenes, showing really fine team play between “herself” and Michael MacLiammoir as Prince Albert. The rest of the company were always competent and often excellent—detailed reference is too complicated to be possible here. I admired the facility with which the realities of her régime were glossed over by sentimental regard for Victoria herself—she was made very human certainly, but only in the last scene (a very fine one by the way) were the people heard, and then the decent folks were too kind to the dear old lady to voice their grievances. Her philosophy of repression and evasion of fact nevertheless cropped up again and again to strike sympathetic chords in the hearts of old ladies who thronged the Gate for the long run of this play. Probably their only previous knowledge of the Rotunda and its environs was derived from

their grandmother's memories of Doctor Mosse's levees in the Rotunda Gardens 'way back in 1770 odd.

It is to be hoped they will support *Twelfth Night* equally well, for it thoroughly deserves it. In teamwork, pointing of lines, effective business and sheer down-right gusto it is the best show the Gate has done for years. Hilton Edwards' Sir Toby Belch is a masterpiece of characterisation, from make-up to gesture; Cecil Monson's Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and Robert Hennessey's Malvolio are almost equally fine, and show what excellent material willingly lending itself to control can do. Michael MacLiammoir's Duke was rather weak, and so were all the actresses concerned—they seemed either to have been rather overlooked in the production or else their hearts or abilities failed them. As a result much of the poetry of the play was lost, depending as this does on the Duke, Viola and Olivia. Maria was played by Mairin Hayes as a mere serving wench, suiting the emphasis laid on the comic in the production, which is hardly in accord with the script. In short, the gallery is definitely played to, but for once it is justified by sheer deftness of handling—the five minutes dumbshow after Act I. scene 5, and the garden scenes in which W. Fassbender lent very good support, being especially delightful—and here charming fantasy in MacLiammoir's designing helped in imparting the necessary style, his box-garden setting being surely one of his loveliest designs and very simple really, as well as permitting staging the letter scene in the most credible manner possible. His colourful traverse curtain was also a delight to the eye—the colouring and drawing, executed by Molly McEwan, being exquisitely pure and certain. The costumes were equally fine, Olivia's pink creation in 18th-century style being the only one out of place.

Finally, the Comhar Dramuiochta—*Cruadh-chás na mBaitsilíirí*, presented by the U.C.D. Gaelic Society, can be dismissed by saying that the Universities will ruin the Gaelic cause by lending themselves to "work" of this sort—the play itself was weak, the players worse, and the general effect was merely painful. But the Craobh Moibhi players, producer Tomás Luibhéad, are to be congratulated on a really fine rendering of *Athbharra*. The speaking was a delight throughout, and most of the players gave really finished performances, especially Tomas Luibhéad himself as the son, Niamh Nic Gheairilt as the schoolmistress (especially in Act 2, which depended mainly on her), and for complete finish, poise, and lovely diction, Maire Ní Dubhgáin's short and only appearance in Act I. left me regretting her absence for the rest of the night. The rest of the team did their best, but only occasionally attained real life—a prevailing fault being lack of modulation in speaking, coupled with awkward gesture. So far so good—but when will the Comhar realise that a show will not command respect until it is properly staged—the staging of these shows was terrible. Some of the Comhar subsidy might well be spent on timber and paint—designers are surely available if called upon.

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA



## LAMENT FOR THE PROVINCE WITHOUT PLAYWRIGHTS

Ulster is properly broken in. Cinemas, all *super* and many superfluous, now adorn every Belfast suburb and most Northern towns. The moving picture organisations have done their work thoroughly.

They've smashed our stage; they've almost established for celluloid a monopoly of dramatic entertainment. Our so-called Opera House has degenerated into a twice-nightly vaudeville house, though very occasionally it remembers past glories and stages a play or a fortnight of the Carl Rosa. Revolt is centred in the Little Theatre Repertory Company, gallant fighters who manage to stage a play every week, despite the handicaps of a miserable hall, an inadequate stage, an unreliable audience and a lack of home-town dramatists. This last is one of the most depressing features of the situation. Most other repertory companies have attracted to themselves playwrights of some ability: the Dublin Gate and Abbey theatres are outstanding examples. But of the 160 or so plays that the Little Theatre company have produced since 1933, only seven have been written by Ulster authors. Of these seven Ulstermen, C. K. Munro and St. John Ervine must be accounted products of the London stage, and Denis Johnston is a naturalised Dubliner. The remaining four are entirely Ulster, but their plays were received without enthusiasm in their native town and have yet to be produced elsewhere. Of the amateur societies, only the Northern Drama League, the Queen's University Dramatic Society, and a company of Jewish players make any attempt to get out of the dialect comedy rut. Pleasant enough at a first hearing, plays of *The Auction at Killybuck* class grow wearisome as a permanent and unvaried diet.

What's wrong? Who's to blame? Why are there no Ulster dramatists? I'll tell you.

First, the Ulster playgoers. They are quite impervious to new ideas, thoroughly disapprove of anything savouring of political heterodoxy, and work on the principle that an Ulster dramatist is no good unless he has been okayed by the London critics. The Belfast newspapers have similar views, and air them most irritatingly.

Second, the B.B.C. They're the people with the money; they could do a lot to help if they liked. I know the Regional Director occasionally bleats that he wants Plays by Ulstermen, but he'll have to do something more exciting to get them. At present the Corporation perform the routine dialect comedies and occasionally attempt to fit Shakespeare into this mould. Gone are the splendid days when Tyrone Guthrie, then Station Director in Belfast, wrote *The Flowers Are Not For You to Pick* and *The Squirrel Cage*. Had he been here longer, he might have encouraged some Ulstermen into developing his method. Despite the limitations of the radio as a vehicle of expression, despite the rules and regulations which protect the listening public from anything unsettling or impure, the B.B.C. could do a lot for drama in the North.

Third, the amateur movement. If they have made any effort to find new plays written by Ulstermen, I have still to hear of it. And production, even a muddled amateur production, means a lot to a young dramatist learning his job. The amateur societies should band together to encourage native play-writing.

I have, you will notice, omitted the plea which usually crops up when drama in Ulster is discussed—the plea for a State subsidised theatre. I cannot conceive of the Government producing even a modest sum for such an undertaking. Perhaps I'm a pessimist, perhaps some successful lobbyist will stimulate a member of Parliament into agitating for such a grant. If Mr. Thomas Henderson could be persuaded into diverting his exuberance from record-breaking to theatre-creating he might well wear the Government down, he might well have a little playhouse planted right in the centre of the Shankill. That would be a grand day for Ulster.

WILLIAM CARTER

Since this article was written, Mr. Denis Johnston's appointment to the Programmes Staff of the N. Ireland Regional Station of the B.B.C. has been announced. Mr. Johnston would appear to be admirably qualified to shatter the Corporation's present narrow conception of the possibilities of radio drama, and I look forward to some stimulating broadcasts when he gets into his stride.

W. C.

**ART**—continued from page 59

### **METROPOLITAN SCHOOL OF ART STUDENTS EXHIBITION**

The oils gave little promise. Tendencies in general : musty studio atmosphere, timidity, sentimentality, lack of imagination, tendency to paint "pictures" rather than express thought or emotion through individual use of paint, and this not offset by any technical experimenting. To sum up : the letter badly written and the spirit fled.

The work of Miss Joyce Roper promises in intent. In this context it has the harshness of reaction and an uncompromising quality most evident in *Herzogin Cecilie on the Rocks*. She is refreshing in the ladylike atmosphere. A *Still Life* of Margaret Stokes has directness of approach, but the canvas is too crowded.

The water colours were more hopeful in spite of, or because of the fact, that least attention is paid to this branch in the school curriculum. Felicitie Ferguson's *The Swannery*, *Bruges* and *A Corner of Old Bruges* have a fugitive and mood-capturing quality. Michael Burke's *Market Morning* is sound but laboured. I prefer the freedom and dramatic quality of his *Rosturk near Mulranny* or *The Rainstorm Achill*.

In any criticism of this show the names of women will predominate.

EDWARD SHEEHY

## FILMS

### THREE PRIVATES AND A GENERAL

THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI—*Robert Wiene.*

THE SACRED MOUNTAIN—*Arnold Fanck.*

CINDERELLA—*Ludwig Berger.*

THE BELOVED VAGABOND—*Kurt Bernhardt.*

Within the past month three films of some considerable artistic pretensions have been shown privately to members of the Irish Film Society. Of the three, the "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" has long ago established itself as a landmark in the aesthetic development of the Cinema, and even though it was made in 1919 it still exerts that curious attraction which must have proved a bewildering innovation to older filmgoers. I have seen this film at least ten times, and I find that each time an added richness appears. One of the least satisfying reactions are the comparisons the picture bears to the detriment of our contemporary films. Because though technically the cinema may have progressed with an amazing rapidity, in actual handling of technique there is no attempt to subordinate technique to a creative purpose, for the simple reason that, except in a few increasingly isolated cases, there appears to be no creative purpose.

In the hands of modern commerce can anything else be expected? The question then arises as to whether commerce is to be allowed an absolute authority in the dictation of content, technical allocation and international distribution which is what it does with impunity at present.

The director of this early film realized that actors, settings and sequence of images were things to be subordinated to a complete theme and were not elements to be exploited for their individual qualities to the extent of eliminating a unified spatial and temporal continuity. In his case the object was to present the distorted fantasies of a madman and the spectator was asked to associate himself with the central character and to see the dramatic series of events through his eyes. In this way the director broke with the hitherto photographic attitude towards the cinema, where photographed events depended for their validity on a relation to actuality and not to their combination and association in an absolute medium—a spatial-temporal continuity.

It may appear that I am stressing an incidental aspect of the film and clouding it in a screen of vague technicalities. My justification for this insistence on the non-actual nature of film is that this fact is the very life blood of Cinema and that in the present day commercial cinema this principle is so blatantly flouted. To-day your film actor is a creature over-dressed with associations; your art designer one who is encouraged to spend money for the sake of spending, your cameraman one with a passion for actuality for actualities sake (so very documentary don't you think) and your director a pitiful creature of doubtful purpose.

And as if the studio position were not bad enough there is the vicious circle



of distributors whose sense of values is dictated by commercial gain at all costs and who succeed in crushing out any film of merit because it would act as a potent accuser of their greedy prostitution of a people's entertainment. Here in Ireland our distributors and cinema managers give lip service to the cultural values of cinema. They mean well by art, etc., etc., but when it comes to the point of doing something constructive, well, it's just too bad if the public doesn't like that sort of thing. Actually one can feel the tremblings of their middle class souls at the mere mention of Art.

Truly "Caligari" is an important film, if there are such implications aroused by its showing seventeen years after its creation in a tiny Berlin Studio.

An added interest in the film is the fact of the inclusion in the caste of Conrad Veidt, Werner Krauss and Lil Dagover, all of whom have since achieved international fame.

Dr. Fanck's "Sacred Mountain" shown in Ireland about 1927 under the title "Wrath of the Gods," was to provide a formula for a whole series of films dealing with snow clad mountains and associated with the names of Fanck, Riefenstahl and Trenker, the more familiar being "Pitz Pale," "Fight for the Matterhorn," "The White Flame," "The Doomed Battalion," and "Song of the Alps." A simple triangle situation projected against a background of sea and mountains and coloured by an element of fantasy constitutes the theme. As in all Fanck films much of the effect is got from the beautiful photography. The three mountaineering players, Trenker, Riefenstahl and Petersen form the dramatic interest.

Dr. Ludwig Berger's charming "Cinderella" with architecture by Rudolf Bamberger, is one of those gems of Cinema which will have a perennial and universal interest. The simple tale is unfolded with a consistency of style which gives it a special life of its own, again reminding us of the poverty of our "popular" cinema in this essential of all good work. Settings and costumes in German 18th century styles strike the dominant note of the film and the players add their splendid performances. Frieda Richard as the Fairy Godmother brings a spirit into her playing that reminds us of an ancient Puck and the magic mood in the film is appropriately due to her. The gentle humour of the direction, the grotesqueries of the Stepmother (Olga Tschechowa) and her daughters, the boyish charm of Paul Hartman's Prince, and the quiet simplicity of Helga Thomas' Cinderella, make this film a rare treat when shown in this year of uncinematic grace.

When a director with distinguished work to his credit assisted by an art director of no less distinction and a host of assistants of international fame proceeds to film a well-known novel in an English studio, the result is bound to be an "efficient."

I have not read Locke's novel, and can therefore judge Kurt Bernhardt's "Beloved Vagabond" as Film with an unprejudiced eye (or perhaps one should say ear). Pathetically one is made to realize what money can do to the best of artists. You felt how expensive those studio lights were. How

cleverly those gleaming sets were constructed—such lovely white plasters and an odd beautiful exterior or so. Mr. Chevalier's personality is fascinating too, and those younger players how right they looked. But what did it all amount to. I'm afraid we didn't really know these people. Incident following incident revealing nothing about the characters whose destinies we were asked to follow, nothing much about the places they visited and of a central feeling for a charming tale—nothing.

No, you may put Bernhardt, Andreiev, Planer, Milhaud, Nares (dialogue supervisor), Chevalier, etc., into your dish, Mr. Toeplitz, but you've forgotten the most important ingredient—necessity.

LIAM O LAOGHAIRE

## NEW BOOKS ON THE CINEMA

Three new film books received cover the interests of the ordinary filmgoer, the amateur filmmaker and the professional producer with, in each case, an overlapping of appeal.

MOVIE PARADE. By Paul Rotha. (*Studio, Ltd.*, 10s. 6d.) is an attractive pictorial record of the artistic and commercial development of the film with informative commentary on each of the many sections. It is the first rival in English to the German picture book, "Film Photos wie noch nie," and in some ways surpasses it. Realizing the limitations of his book, Rotha points out that it "should serve at least one useful purpose. It should remind us that Cinema has built up a past and is every day building up a tradition." It should also help the Irish filmgoer to realize the limitations imposed on his Cinema and to note the outstanding films and landmarks of the screen which he has not been allowed to see. If it does this it should automatically create a demand—a demand which will have to be attended to some day.

Leaving the realm of moviegoing for the ever more fascinating province of moviemaking, there is the welcome appearance in English of Alex. Strasser's AMATEUR FILMS (*Link House Publications, Ltd.*, 7s. 6d.), a book dealing in a sane and simple manner with what many believe to be a highly complex and technical subject. The author does not take long in revealing his attitude: "Film making itself is an imaginative craft and amateurs will find it relatively easy or intolerably difficult according to their particular temperament and character." It is with this uppermost in his mind that he takes the reader through the fundamentals of film, always with simplicity, informatively and never overburdening his narrative with cumbersome technical details. And all the time anticipating the difficulties of the novice. This book is not to be overlooked by the mere movie goer. For the movie maker it is doubtful if there's a better book on the subject.

Brunel's book on FILM PRODUCTION (*Newnes*, 7s. 6d.) is less satisfying even if it is entertainingly written and does contain much useful information interspersed amongst the author's reminiscences and padding. There is much of the commercial approach even though directed towards the amateur, who is usually assumed to be above suspicion. Interesting appendices by experts in various branches add to the attractions of the volume.

LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE

# BOOK SECTION

## THE IRISH SHELF

### "UP DEV"

UNIQUE DICTATOR. By Desmond Ryan. (*Arthur Barker*, 10s. 6d.).

The shelf of books devoted to "the long fellow" is growing. This latest is the best and the best thing Desmond Ryan has done, and yet on leaving it down one is assailed by the suspicion that Dev. has again eluded the reporters. Unique biographer who makes little attempt to draw aside the great man's cloak and impertinently "fix" him for posterity; but, notebook in hand, follows his statuesque figure through twenty years of turmoil, accumulating an amazing pile of evidence, speeches, newspaper reports, interviews, memoranda, correspondence, covering every aspect of the public life of one who has elected to enjoy less privacy than any king, all strung together in a vivid manner somewhat reminiscent of Carlyle, in which fact is occasionally subordinated to colour.

The book falls naturally into three divisions. During the first, which is the period of the Irish Republic, the President has the complete admiration of his biographer. The second deals with the Treaty Crisis and the Civil War, and here, in spite of a determined impartiality, less than justice is done to Mr. De Valera. The third is concerned with the return from the wilderness and Fianna Fail. Of these, the first is by far the best. When Mr. Ryan relates the defence of Boland's Mill in 1916, the pages are lit with the flames of burning Dublin and the crack of machine guns and the thunder of artillery are authentic, translated from O'Connell Street, where Desmond Ryan stood behind the barricades. In the chapters on Easter Week and the period of the Republic, the style marches with the matter on notes of tension and heroism. This part is more than a biography, it is the story of our Golden Age and the background of personalities against which the central figure mover is in high relief. And what a background, what personalities! Cathal Brugha and Michael Collins, Arthur Griffith and Austin Stack, Mellows, O'Connor, Liam Lynch, Erskine Childers, and Harry Boland, follow the epic figure of Easter Week across the pages, and for this part alone the book would be worth while.

The Treaty negotiations found Mr. Ryan in the office of the "Freeman's Journal," and though he severed his connection with it as a result of the scandalous campaign which that paper joined the "Independent" in launching against the President, it is to be feared that the dregs of a private loyalty have deprived him of absolute impartiality. A deep sympathy with Arthur Griffith, possibly arising from a feeling that the pen is mightier than the sword, may have also impaired his vision. The hoary tale that Document No. 2 was only a quibble is at least quoted without properly emphasising the fundamental differences between it and the Treaty, differences which Mr. De Valera masked by retaining as far as possible the wording of the Treaty with a subtlety which overreached itself. This was the crisis of his career and deserves more consideration than Mr. Ryan gives it. In particular, Document No. 2 and the principle of "external association," of which we have by no means heard the last, was De Valera's studied contribution to a solution of the relations between us and England, and "the more it changes the more it is the same thing."

Mr. Ryan agrees that De Valera did not want Civil War. But his actions or inactions at the time were equivocal and, like Document No. 2, founded in subtleties that only bewildered the mass of the people. Indeed, had he



desired civil war and boldly proclaimed a determination to lead the country in arms against the Treaty, there would have been neither Treaty nor disunion. The I.R.A. felt his powerful influence was on their side, but overestimated his partisanship. Had Mr. De Valera rigidly followed his conscience he would have found himself without any political following and without any prospect of a come back, so, though Treaty and Civil War were equally repugnant to him, he allowed himself to be dragged reluctantly in the wake of the Iron Man, Cathal Bruhga. This vacillation infected the I.R.A. and explains to some extent both their participation in the war and their fatally half-hearted prosecution of it.

And since 1923 Mr. De Valera has steadily moved towards a repudiation of the Civil War. Reference to it in his speeches are increasingly apologetic, prefaced with some such gambit as "whatever one may say of the men of 1922, at least——." In his broadcast at the opening of Athlone Station, while emphasising the economic purpose behind militant nationalism since 1681, he paid tribute to every eruption of the struggle up to 1921, but no further, and his pointed omission of the men of 1922–23 was more than suggestive. Finally, the Military Service Pensions Act passed by his Government in 1934 ignores as far as it dares the Civil War so that, to take an outstanding example, a man like the famous Robert Bonfield, who graduated from the Fianna Boy Scouts into the I.R.A. in 1918 and was killed in 1923 would, if he were alive to-day, be ineligible for a pension although his name was freely used by the Fianna Fail party when they were the opposition.

In the biography of a great man the average reader looks for those intimacies which link the subject with humanity and himself. Mr. Ryan in this respect fails to give us the "low down" on Mr. De Valera. It is true that he tells us that in the heat of an exhausting debate the President of the Executive Council sends for the latest and heaviest tomes on higher mathematics for relaxation, but the average reader will react to that truth with the exclamation: "Boloney!" In that chapter devoted to "the man," he refers to radio and chess and indefatigable reading, but these pursuits are squeezed unconvincingly into a single sentence and the conventional genuflection which Mr. Ryan makes to a rich family life only strengthens the suspicion that Mr. De Valera has concealed himself from Desmond Ryan as from everyone else, with the possible exception of the late Austin Stack.

In his introduction the author hazards the opinion that Mr. De Valera will not like this book, but probably he will object to the title most. For dictatorship is the antithesis of his professed policy, having come, he claims, to pin his faith to the counting of heads rather than scalps as the ultimate argument. And this is perhaps less of a change than it may seem. He has always been ready to substitute for the iron hand a pertinacity of persuasion which is just as frightful, and this painstaking book reveals the essential changelessness of De Valera. Wherever he learned his philosophy, it certainly "took." Perhaps the finest thing that could be said of him is to remark, as Desmond Ryan does, the perfect sincerity with which De Valera has said: "Whenever I wanted to know what the Irish people desired, I had only to look in my own heart."

JOHN MCCARTHY

### GAELIC LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

ANCIENT IRISH TALES. Edited by Tom Peete Cross and Clark Harris Slover.  
London: *Harrap*. 10s. 6d.

It is seventy-five years since O'Curry made early Irish literature known to the common reader in Ireland by his *Lectures on the MSS. Materials of Ancient*

*Irish History.* His work bore immediate fruit in the work of Todd and Hennessy and Atkinson and Stokes, and later in the founding of the School of Irish Learning; but recently there has been a decline of activity. It is as though the language has flourished at the expense of the literature. And so this valuable collection of Irish stories comes to us from two American scholars. Most of the famous tales are here, The Voyage of Bran, the Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel, The Wooing of Étaín, Bricriu's Feast, The Wooing of Emer, the Deirdre story and the T in itself, and, of the later tradition, The Adventures of Cormac in the Land of Promise, The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Gráinne, an extract from the Agallamh, and much more besides. Together with the first volume of the Chadwick's *Growth of Literature*, this book renews the claim of Irish literature on the attention of readers of English. It should have a wide welcome, and may do much good.

But here appreciation must end. The book will bring discredit on editors and publisher alike. The work of other scholars has been taken without proper acknowledgment and printed under the names of two editors who have contributed practically nothing but the scissors and the paste. Mistakes and omissions are copied faithfully, without any sign of acquaintance with recent work. The editors seek to cover themselves by a general admission in the preface that 'in so far as the translations are not original with the editors' they are based upon renderings given in the *Revue Celtique*, *Ériu* and elsewhere. It is only fair to those whose work has been pirated, that a reviewer should make clear what the procedure has been. I shall take passages from translations published by three scholars who are amongst the victims, and set beside them the rendering of the new editors, so that readers may see in how far these translations are original.

### *The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel.*

Whitley Stokes, *Revue Celtique*, 22, p. 14

Cross and Slover, p. 93.

There was a famous and noble king over Erin named Eochaid Feidlech. Once upon a time he came over the fairgreen of Bri Léith, and he saw at the edge of the well a woman with a bright comb of silver adorned with gold, washing in a silver basin wherein were four golden birds and little, bright gems of purple carbuncle in the rims of the basin. A mantle she had, curly and purple, a beautiful cloak, and in the mantle silvery fringes arranged, and a brooch of fairest gold.

There was a famous and noble king over Erin, named Eochaid Fedlech. Once upon a time he came over the fair-green of Bri Leith, and he saw at the edge of a well a woman with a bright comb of silver adorned with gold, washing in a silver basin wherein were four golden birds and little, bright gems of purple carbuncle in the rims of the basin. A mantle she had, curly and purple, a beautiful cloak, and in the mantle silvery fringes arranged, and a brooch of fairest gold.

### *The Voyage of Bran.*

Meyer, *Voyage of Bran*, p. 18.

Cross and Slover, p. 592.

Bran sees  
The number of waves beating across  
the clear sea :  
I myself see in Mag Mon  
Red-headed flowers without fault.

Bran sees  
The number of waves beating across  
the clear sea.  
I myself see in Mag Mon  
Rosy-colored flowers without fault.

Sea-horses glisten in summer  
As far as Bran has stretched his glance:  
Rivers pour forth a stream of honey  
In the land of Mannanan son of Ler.

Sea-horses glisten in summer  
As far as Bran has stretched his glance:  
Rivers pour forth a stream of honey  
In the land of Mannanan son of Lir.

(Here 'rosy-colored' does not translate *cenn-derga*, and the change from 'Ler' to 'Lir' is simply wrong.)

*The Adventures of Art, Son of Conn.*

Best, *Ériu*, 3, p. 157.

Cross and Slover, p. 494.

And it is thus the island was, having fair fragrant apple-trees, and many wells of wine most beautiful, and a fair bright wood adorned with clustering hazel-trees surrounding those wells, with lovely golden-yellow nuts, and little bees ever beautiful humming over the fruits, which were dropping their blossoms and their leaves into the wells. Then he saw near by a shapely hostel, thatched with birds' wings, white, and yellow and blue. And he went up to the hostel. 'Tis thus it was, with doorposts of bronze and doors of crystal, and a few generous folk within.

And it is thus the island was : having fair, fragrant apple-trees, and many wells of wine most beautiful, and a fair bright wood adorned with clustering hazel-trees surrounding those wells, with lovely golden-yellow nuts, and little bees ever beautiful humming over the fruits, which were dropping their blossoms and their leaves into the wells. Then he saw near-by a shapely hostel thatched with birds' wings, white, and yellow and blue. And he went up to the hostel. 'Tis thus it was : with doorposts of bronze and doors of crystal, and a few generous inhabitants within.

(The colons in the first and fourteenth lines, the hyphen in 'near-by' and the questionable substitution of 'inhabitants' in the last line are the original features.)

These extracts are in no way exceptional so far as the originality of the present editors are concerned, but some of the lines are famous, and the scholars who wrote them deserve the credit.

In the same way, The Wooing of Emer has simply been taken from Meyer's translation, *Cuchullin Saga*, p. 57. The passages omitted there are omitted here too, but without any indication. I have noticed at p. 161 an omission of over two hundred lines (ZCP 3, 238-246), and again at p. 165 a troublesome passage is omitted—Meyer had not provided a translation. P. 155, for 'his rebirth would be of himself, read 'from him alone would come his like.' P. 167 *tét* is rendered 'path' and 'road,' but it means 'rope.' These mistakes are nearly forty years old, and have been corrected long ago, but here they are copied faithfully.

The quality of the stories is not diminished by the piracy of the editors, and, though I should not care to have the book on my conscience, I cannot help hoping that it will be widely read in Ireland and elsewhere. Indeed, to judge from the mistakes which they have introduced when trying to stand on their own feet, the fact that the book is not really the work of the editors is its greatest recommendation.

MYLES DILLON

## LOOKING NORTH

THE FOUR GREEN FIELDS. By George O'Brien. (*Talbot Press*, 3/6 net.)

The main theme of Professor O'Brien's book is Partition and the author's conclusion is that if Mr. Baldwin is wise enough to call off the economic war and Mr. de Valera patient enough in his handling of constitutional questions, the Ulster problem may be solved in time by an appeal to Orange good-will. Nothing can alter the *data* of Partition except the Ulster ascendancy party. The growth of Orangeism since the Union, and its function in the British political game are well developed, but throughout the book the author shows a strange reluctance to place the blame for Partition where it really belongs—on successive British Governments since 1914. He agrees that they were unable, that they failed, but never that they were unwilling to avoid partition. He finds excuses for the impotence of the British Government in their dealings with Orangemen, but it does not strike him as strange that the same Government used their full resources to coerce Irish Nationalists.



His treatment of Sinn Fein and the period from 1916 to 1921 is scarcely adequate, and it is important to note, in connection with a book which will be drawn on by the future historian, that his implication of Sinn Fein in a share of the guilt for Partition is unfair. "After 1916 the situation rapidly became worse until in 1921, it had become quite intolerable." Masterly summarization, perhaps, but hardly good enough for a historian. There is no mention of the 1918 election and no reference to the establishment of an Irish Republican Government. The only constructive action of the official Sinn Fein Party (he means the Republican Government) towards a solution of Partition was the Belfast Boycott. This is untrue. The Belfast Boycott was intended to stop the appalling pogroms in the North. One feels that at all costs the reputation of the Irish Party is being kept untarnished. The abstentionist policy was, it is implied, regarded as an "ideal situation" by the Conservatives.

Could the Union have succeeded? It is an academic question, but his treatment of it reveals that Professor O'Brien does not grasp the strength of separatist feeling. Similarly in dealing with the post-Treaty phase, he does not bring out clearly that Ireland's aspirations are not satisfied within the Commonwealth. He quotes Pearse's statement that Bodenstown is the holiest spot in Ireland, but he forgets that "Ireland unfree can never be at peace."

The range of the book is enormous. Towards the end, Professor O'Brien examines the party divisions in the South, and laments the exclusion of the Unionist Ascendancy. We all desire "a polite and elegant civilization" in Ireland, but references to "the whims of irresponsible masses" and to the necessity of rousing the greed of the self-seeking in order to win an election leave us in doubt as to the best means of achieving it.

Anyone familiar with recent events in Ireland will derive pleasure and interest from this book, but to the younger generation to whom 1916 is "history," it is hardly a safe guide. However, one feels that Professor O'Brien has enjoyed writing it, and one envies him the luxury of developing a personal point of view.

D. C. L.

THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND. A Study in Devolution. By Nicholas Mansergh, M.A., D.LITT., D.PHIL. (*George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.* 12s. 6d.).

Made for the guidance of British politicians and others interested in the possibility of establishing similar subordinate legislatures for England and Wales, this critical analysis of self-government in Northern Ireland fails in its ostensible object because, as a revelation of the possibilities of Federal Devolution, such an analysis can have no greater value than the political experiment on which it is based and few convincing conclusions can be drawn from any experiment carried out under what the author himself describes as "the incredible circumstances now prevailing in Ulster." It is rather as a study of these conditions and of the historical and political processes which produced them that Dr. Mansergh has given us a work of real value and one which should be in great demand amongst the Irish-reading public now that talk of a new constitution has revived intense interest in the Partition problem.

For readers familiar with Dr. Mansergh's work it is hardly necessary to stress the fact that this book provides an accurate and lucid account of the structure and functions of the Northern Government. Almost one-half of the work is devoted to facts and figures concerning relations with Westminster, abolition of Proportional Representation, the Imperial Contribution, education,

taxation, unemployment, and kindred subjects, but the whole is something more than a mere compendium of useful information. It is a frank study of the complex "Ulster question" by a writer who has the courage to present facts and deductions therefrom without any false parade of impartiality, unless impartiality can be said to consist of a hearty dislike for extremists on both sides.

A perusal of the facts and figures presented leaves the reader with a mental picture of a small artificially constructed state neither a national, nor an economic unit subsidized by an Empire which, having brought it into the world, must ever humour its own offspring; a state of small farmers and industrial workers ruled by an oligarchy, its capital "like Vienna, a city without a background," its inhabitants embittered by sectarian rivalries which have reduced political life to a state of stagnation.

Now, however unpleasing the above picture of Northern political life may be to the Unionist Party of the North, at least it rests on evidence which can be tested and then refuted or accepted; only in those few sentences devoted to Northern Republicans does Dr. Mansergh appear to dispense with figures, facts, and commonsense. The Nationalists are commended for having taken "the wiser course" in the matter of abstention but, since it is admitted that "the Nationalists have as yet been unable to influence in any way any legislature proposed by the Government," some few words might well have been spared to show wherein their superior wisdom lies. The same complete absence of evidence characterizes the arbitrary differentiation between the two sections of Northern Nationalist opinion, that a Northern Catholic votes with one or other of these political groups in accordance with the measure of his devotion or antagonism to Catholic principles in the home and state must be news indeed to members of both parties. This is the one instance where the Propagandist Press seems to have taken the place of personal information as the author's most valuable source of evidence.

To those who harbour a hazy notion that the ultimate settlement of Ireland's political difficulties should take the form of four independent provincial parliaments this study is especially recommended—as a warning.

SHEILA G. KENNEDY

### THE GREATEST OF THE FOUR MASTERS

MICHAEL O CLEIRIGH AND HIS ASSOCIATES. By Brendan Jennings, O.F.M., B.D. (*Talbot Press, 7s. 6d.*).

The Rev. Brendan Jennings has chosen a suitable occasion for the publication of a work dealing with the greatest of the Four Masters and his literary friends. It was on 10 August, 1639, that the last words of the "Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland" were composed. Fr. Jennings is the distinguished editor of the seventeenth-century compilations, regarding the history of the Irish province of the Franciscan Order, recently published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission in *Analecta Hibernica*. He now presents the public with a book which is an interpretative account of much of the material he has already printed. There can be but few scholars equally familiar with these documents, and the student of Irish history will be thankful that Fr. Jennings has found time to make his knowledge generally available.

The work of the Four Masters and their associates in ecclesiastical and civil history is not as well known as it deserves. The Rev. Dr. Corcoran has stated that in the 17th century "the reputation of Irish scholarship . . . stood highest in European lands." It was, in fact, the real period of Ireland's literary

renaissance. The study of Irish history and the collection of historical documents in the modern method may be said to begin with Michael O Cleirigh and Sir James Ware, the former concerning himself with the literature in Irish ; the latter, mainly, with that in English.

Fr. Jennings does not refer to the recently published "Ἀσὸς μὰς Ἀντιστᾶς ἂν Σκοτ Νῦα-ῤαερίτσε ἰ Λοῦᾶιν," by Tomás Ó Cleirigh, M. A., which is partly concerned with the same subject. He has, however, made a scholarly contribution to the recent discussion on the location of the Donegal Franciscan convent wherein the great works of O Cleirigh were produced. In his opinion this convent, since about the year 1610, had been located at Bundrowes (Bundrobhais), which is near the coast on the boundary between Ulster and Connacht. Fr. Jennings does not, however, advert to the argument based upon tradition, which has recently been put forward by Mr. Henry Morris, M.A. (*Irish Independent*, 2 June, 1936), and which favours Rosfriar, County Leitrim.

The author tells us that O Cleirigh dated some of his colophons in Old Style, but leaves it to the reader to determine the mode of dating in each case. As much of the matter is concerned with O Cleirigh's itinerary, it would have been very helpful to have had Fr. Jennings's own opinion as to the dating of the various colophons.

R. DUDLEY EDWARDS

### STEPHEN MACKENNA

JOURNAL AND LETTERS OF STEPHEN MACKENNA. Edited by E. R. Dodds. (*Constable and Co.*, 18/-).

The name of Stephen MacKenna evokes one of the most vivid periods of recent Irish history, that of Dublin life from 1900 to 1914, when the renaissance in politics, literature, drama, the Gaelic language were all drawing together to make the modern Ireland. It evokes the memory of one of the most vivid and delightful of the literary and public characters of that time. MacKenna, in a time when Dublin talk was at its best, was, perhaps, the best of our talkers, certainly the most eloquent, versatile and generous of our talkers.

It is now three years since he died in a London nursing home, a poor man, and since 1923 a self-exiled dweller in England. He was born about 1875, son of a British army officer ; after some years of poverty in Dublin, he spent many more and even harder years in Paris ; went to fight for Greece against Turkey, became a successful cosmopolitan journalist ; and returned to Dublin in 1907. Some six or seven happy years were destined for him and his American-Irish wife, Marie, in a house in Donnybrook, which many of us return remember with emotion as " 5 Rayarc Na Mara." After that, the clouds gathered round, an operation for him which meant ill-health for the rest of his life, and finally prolonged illness for Marie, which left him a widower in 1922. At the end he was left a poor, indeed a very poor man, and decided to transfer himself to Southern England, from which he returned to Ireland no more, though he left his heart here like many another.

Stephen MacKenna was of the old Fenian tradition, what he thought of 1916, the Great War, the Treaty, and the civil war a younger generation can read in these pages.

Before his troubles began, MacKenna, who had always loved the classics, turned his mind to Plotinus, the last almost of the Platonist philosophers and it would appear the most difficult to translate. Through the generous patronage of Mr. Debenham, he was at last enabled, though with great agonisings, to get the whole of his translation out, and by common consent



of the Hellenists of Great Britain, MacKenna's six volumes of the "Enneads" is an achievement of the highest fame, if not the last word in interpretation, yet for the beauty and felicity of the English unsurpassed and unsurpassable. That is MacKenna's claim to public fame.

Eric Dodds, who is one of England's finest Hellenists, was also one of MacKenna's personal friends, though he came late to the circle of those young men whom MacKenna inspired and loved in various ways and for various things. It is fitting that he should have undertaken to collect what letters of Stephen were extant, to piece together from them and the memories of friends a memoir or biography of the man, and add to them a Journal of MacKenna's in early years and an appreciation by Padriac Colum. It is a good book to handle and to read. The life is that of a man whose mental and spiritual adventures were more thrilling than his physical ones, though he had these too. The Letters reveal him as at once the eloquent and humorous talker that he was, the enthusiast for Irish, the Greek scholar, a religious type interested in all humanity and human experience, a lover of children and the simple, of all the men that we have known the man with the greatest genius for friendship. The most entertaining of men, it was never wearisome to be in his company.

E. C.

### CASEMENT VINDICATED

THE FORGED CASEMENT DIARIES. By William J. Maloney, M.D., LL.D. (Talbot Press. 10s. 6d.).

In 1914 Masaryk, late State University Professor and Deputy in the pay of Austria, turned "traitor-patriot." He came to England, proposed forming brigades from Czech prisoners in the hands of the Allies, and in return was promised England's aid in achieving Czech aspirations for National freedom. England welcomed him. The press lionised him. Masaryk records of August, 1916: "The pitiable Sir Roger Casement was, at that moment, about to meet his fate."

With this parallel Dr. Maloney opens his work. England is the champion of small nationalities, Pole, Czech, Slav and Alsatian, but only of those whose National aspirations would embarrass her Imperial enemy. Casement's open rebellion is at this stage fatal. With his reputation for integrity, for befriending oppressed against oppressor, he cannot be easily discounted. So propagandist and forger of the British Foreign Office must prove him a madman to destroy his influence alive and a sexual pervert to rob his death of its value as sacrifice. The diaries, in typescript and photostatic copies, are shown where it best suits the purpose of propaganda and immediate interest. British Ambassadors, lawyers, statesmen, bankers and men of letters abroad have them on display. Veiled articles in the press hint at them and give them weight. Alfred Noyes, at once victim and instrument of propaganda writes in August, 31st, 1916: "And the chief leader of these rebels—I cannot print his own written confessions about himself, for they are filthy beyond description. But I have *seen* and read them, and they touch the lowest depths that human degradation has ever touched. . . . The Irish will canonize these things at their own peril." (*Philadelphia Public Ledger*.)

Dr. Maloney discloses the machinery and psychology of the propaganda, tracing each manifestation back to its source in the British Foreign Office. His work is a painstaking, thorough and well documented indictment of that Office on charges of forgery, calumny and misrepresentation. And he proves his case.

I wonder if there is any lesson for the future in such unmasking of the means whereby nations and men are stampeded into hatred of one another. Will it be remembered that an interested Government and a servile Press can ignore justice, truth and humanity when and how they will?

EDWARD SHEEHY

"THE IRISH BOOK." By Ronald MacDonald Douglas. (*Talbot Press*. 7/6).

This book gives by means of fragments of prose, poetry, historical fact and folklore, an insight into Irish life and points to the influences, cultural and historical, that have gone to the making of modern Ireland. The selection is comprehensive.

It is not primarily a book for Irishmen nor for the scholar, but will be an excellent aid to the better understanding of Ireland by visitors, giving as it does in form, simple and easily digested, facts about Ireland, past and present—things to do with Language, Place-names, Personal-names, Families, Men and Women, History, Geographical features, Old manuscripts and Education.

It is compiled and written by a Scottish Gael who has what may prove of untold value in the future, a desire to reunite the Gael in the consciousness of their single origin. He ends: "I shall be satisfied if it has done no more than prove that there is at least one Scot who, loving his own country, can yet love Ireland, too; one Scot who understands Ireland and the visionings of Irishmen; one Scot who honours Ireland for what she has done, is doing and still yet will do; one Scot who looks to Ireland . . . and who thanks her . . ."

The book contains reproductions of four excellent drawings of Western folk by Miss E. J. Rivers."

CATRIONA MAC LEOD

## OTHER PLACES

THE BRITISH EMPIRE: ITS STRUCTURE AND ITS PROBLEMS. By Johannes Stoye. (*Bodley Head*, 12s. 6d.).

The genesis, development and future of the British Empire is a subject that cannot fail to be of interest to us. For better or worse, we have forcibly participated in that development and even were the Union Jack to revert to its pre-1801 simplicity, the expansion or dissolution of that Empire would have the most direct repercussions here.

The possibilities of the Empire's dissolution are rationally discussed by Dr. Stoye and he is emphatic that, at any rate, there is no imminence about it. Through more than three hundred pages he drives home his further conclusion that the British Empire stands for something, that its loss would be shared by the world. His analyses are made graphic and memorable by numerous maps and tables and the geopolitical structure of the Empire assumes organic shape before our eyes. The significance of its more recent evolutionary trends, its air links, its desperate determination to have the U.S.A. to fall back on when its coloured colonies have gone and the imperialisms of Germany, Italy and Japan seek to impose their ideology on the island Empire, is unravell'd most painstakingly.

A fundamental I always observe is that the accuracy of a historical or politico-scientific work can be checked up very fairly by awarding the author's dealing with other less known countries the merit of reliability in so far as he evinces this in respect of one's own country. Here on minor points Dr. Stoye does not gain full marks. Referring to the Civil War here as continuing until April,

1923, he adds: "On the English side there were heavy losses too." Although up-to-the-minute in sizing up the political situation here he speaks of the Shannon scheme as something projected merely. With the words "Emerald Isle" he dismisses industrial development for all time "for the Irishman is at heart a peasant." Yet later, as though compiling somewhat scappily from more recent sources, he gives tangible evidence of appreciable developments. Again, he states that Mr. de Valera "has not suppressed the Irish Republican Army in spite of all its attacks on him, for he believes he will yet be able to put its fundamentally sound nationalistic spirit to use for his own purposes." And so on, yet perhaps the surprising thing is that Dr. Stoye has been able to grasp so many of our complexities.

The book is of considerable interest and value.

L. J. ROSS

WAUGH IN ABYSSINIA. By Evelyn Waugh. (*Longmans*, 10/6).

This entertaining book gives the impressions of the author as war correspondent in Abyssinia, and an account of his return to the country after the Italian conquest.

The scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century, when the European nations, regardless of native claims or natural boundaries, shared out a continent with pen, ruler and map, supplies a cynical but satisfactory introduction and brings us up to date for the reading.

Mr. Waugh is the ideal observer. His pen is light, masterly and ironical, and he makes a case for no man, black or white.

Most of the scenes are set in the dingy capital, and deal with the unhappy lot of a group of war correspondents confined there willy nilly by obstructionist native officials, when they would be on the fighting fronts. This, however, in no way detracts from the value of a book in which we see the real Abyssinia at close quarters without bias and without affectation.

We see also the usual band of white men—adventurers and others, soldiers of fortune, pressmen, opportunists, and political representatives, all sketched in an amusing fashion. Germans, Finns, Belgians, Italians and Americans, together with two Irish Free Staters, one of whom is the doubtful winner of a drinking competition.

Mr. Waugh errs a little on the kind side in his pictures of the Abyssinians and their habits, which is perhaps just as well. He also deals kindly with Italy and her aspirations.

It is all easy reading, and one turns back again and again to savour dramatic situations which are intensified by the casual conversational manner in which they are described.

The Italian Commander at Addis Ababa ordering a clerk to fish out the battered crown of the Lion of Judah from an old hat box for identification by Mr. Waugh, is an example of such a situation.

There are many like it throughout the book. In the closing chapters we are shown the country occupied strategically only by an Italian army still maintained at war strength. The capital remains subject to attack by roving bands, and the great wide road, reminiscent of ancient Rome, and more potent than any army, pushes ever southwards following the path of invasion to play the final principal role in the enormous work still to be done.

JOHN LUCY



## POETRY

THE POET'S WALK. A Nature Anthology, made by Viola Meynell: *Jonathan Cape*.

Felicity in literature can extend even to the title of a book: and Miss Meynell's choice in this regard is eminently prepossessing. *The Poet's Walk* suggests a quiet promenade, in pastoral atmosphere, with a meditative eye; it implies a preoccupation with beauty, rather than a feverish pursuit of cleverness; a retreat to the golden age, and an escape from the present period of universal chromjums. The poems included in her collection fulfil the implication of the title-page. Anthologies are numerous and popular to-day; it is, consequently, difficult to provide a table of contents which will not suggest a mere re-arrangement of already well-known poems. Palgrave remains a stumbling block for many in this matter; his *Encyclopedia of Poetry*, as it might be fairly termed, was so comprehensive as to render subsequent anthologies liable to the charge of repetition. Miss Meynell has escaped this danger by frequently turning in her work from the highroad of English poetry into the less frequented lanes; and by this means she had drawn the attention of many lovers of poetry to work which would in all probability otherwise have escaped them; while possibly preserving some occasional delicate lyric from decay; a function of the anthologist too frequently overlooked.

I would place *The Poet's Walk* upon the shelf beside *The Open Road* of Mr. E. V. Lucas, were it not for the very sufficient fact that the latter volume is seldom, if ever, otherwise than in the pocket, for which it is admirably proportioned. Miss Meynell's volume is for the fireside, in winter retrospect. Mr. Lucas tunes his lute to the note of *L'Allegro*: Miss Meynell fancies the mood of *Il Penseroso*.

AN PHILIBÍN

## FICTION

THOMAS MANN

STORIES OF THREE DECADES. By Thomas Mann. (*Martin Secker and Warburg*, 10s. 6d.).

The self-awareness of the man who wrote that endearing story *Tonio Kröger* somewhere around the age of twenty-five in continued beyond the last story in this remarkable collection into a sensitive, self-searching preface which pre-empt the criticism that one might naturally make of all Mann's work. He is aware of his own awareness to a degree devastating in its power of self-corrosion: he evades the corrosive effect of this narcissism only by the intensity of his self-belief, the sharpness of his mental powers, and his integrity as an artist. A lesser man might have become *larmoyante*; a vainer man, like—let us say—d'Aunnezio might have dodged self-judgment. Mann sees himself with honest clarity. He is not unlike Joyce in that, but the romanticism which Joyce managed to a degree to escape, does, for all that, deflate, to some extent, the power of Mann's emotions; while his German love for "implications" leads him to see in his stories a significance which either eludes his readers, or is but a very tiny, and indeed irrelevant part of the pleasure of his work. With these reservations this collection of stories does justify the claim, proffered to-day by so many, that Thomas Mann is the most important living writer of prose fiction.

"Every piece of work," he says, "is in fact a realization of our own nature." His favourite theme is the aristocratic, confessional portrait of the artist (Joyce again) and he sees the artist as an outlaw, a man cursed by the disease

of genius, cut off by his vocation from his fellow men. All through his work that gnawing dissatisfaction with his own isolation creates the tension which most writers find in the problems of these very human beings who elude him. So he may well say, of the *Tonio Kröger* group of tales, that they were the impress of melancholy and ironic reflection on the subject of art and the artist, "his isolation and equivocal position in the world of reality, considered socially and metaphysically, and as a result of the double bond with nature and spirit." People read *Tonio* with a very natural delight; it was young, musical, lyrical, tender, kindly, sweet. Eight years later when he gave us *Death in Venice*, which he himself reckons among his more important works, the sweetness and tenderness were gone. That horrible story of the reputable artist who goes to plague-stricken Venice, dyes his hair, rouges his cheeks, seeking base love, mumbling Plato while his soul squirms beneath his own eyes, has the continued logic of what is implicit in *Tonio*. Allegorical, symbolical it underlines these loved "implications"—but one wonders "What next?" One feels, "This is the deluge." In fact, it was not. The war was. And it came appositely after *Death in Venice* and while he was planning the novel, *The Magic Mountain*.

Driven, by the war, to a re-examination of his premisses, he wrote that sadly bitter story *A Man and His Dog*, and after it, in 1929, we get, in this volume, *Mario the Magician*. And what is one to say of *Mario*, except that, as a story it is powerful in its weirdness, ugly in its atmosphere, modern in its gloom, finished as a piece of fine writing, and (apart from all those—to me invisible—"moral and political implications") pointless in its final effect. Here is the romanticism of the 1830's flourishing in 1929, much more acceptable to our pseudo-moral sense because the cruelty of it—which has been called "the conscience of the younger generation" by Edward Garnett—cuts the grease of the self-pity, but not escaping our final dissatisfaction, our final rebuttal as being incommensurate with the immense amount of motion expended in the writing of it.

Thomas Mann won the Nobel Prize in 1929, and for his artistry and his integrity to his own genius, no man better deserved that honour. He looked at genius as the 1900's made it and he told the truth about it, in stories and novels of consummate artistry. He reflected the corroded society of pre-war Europe, and the despair of post-war Europe—especially post-war Germany. It is highly personal view, however, inflated ego presenting a stretched skin to every blow, a super-sensitive nerve exposed deliberately to pain. Yet—having voiced that dissatisfaction, and fearing that it may be a dissatisfaction with reality rather than with Thomas Mann, one looks around for alternatives. . . . Hemingway? ("Come out from behind the hair on your chest, Mr. Hemingway!" replies that honourable magazine *Esquire*). D. H. Lawrence? Just as masochistic. T. E. Lawrence? A man just as isolated from the mass by his own genius. Joyce? A far bigger ego, as self-sad, as inhuman, as isolated as Mann. Faulkner? Perhaps—there is "guts" in Faulkner. Proust? Is there no end to these isolations? Mauriac? A fine and plucky light-weight. Duhamel, Romains, Rolland . . . somehow or other none of them "can take it." And the rabble of Walpoles and Priestleys and Dekobras just are not even the geese of the capitol. Mann stands alone, with three or four others of his own gloomy kind, among the novelists of his age, reflecting what made him, finely typical of the Despairatics, the logical outcome of the gloriously hopeful years of Charles Barnum Dickens, and the gallantly destructive era of the suicide Maupassant and his literary father, Flaubert, who died prophetically of apoplexy.

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MARY LAVELLE. By Kate O'Brien. (*Heinemann*, 7s. 6d.).

This novel places Miss O'Brien in the forefront of contemporary Irish novelists. It has qualities for which I confess that even the admirable *Without My Cloak* had not prepared me; and it shows triumphantly that Miss O'Brien's penetrative sympathy is not limited to one atmosphere or to one scene. Her awareness of the character of a place is as keen as her awareness of the character of a living person. More than anything which I have read for a very long time, this is a novel of life in motion, rather than a cross section of life at any particular point: a quality which immediately seems to give it an added dimension.

The plot is simple, and, in default of proper space, can be given in a sentence or two. An Irish girl goes as governess to a Spanish family. She has three pupils, sisters, and they live in a fishing village. A number of things happen to her, and love is one of them. Miss O'Brien convinces the reader that she has not only seen Spain, but has understood it as well as she understands her native country. I do not profess, after one reading, to know how good the book is, but I am inclined to bet that it has a long life before it.

L. A. G. STRONG

MY TALKS WITH DEAN SPANLEY. By Lord Dunsany. (*Heinemann*, 5s.).

To see the unseen is the peculiar gift of Irish writers. Perhaps it is because of this that they have never been bound by a consciousness of form, which has strait-laced so many English authors into the confines of the novel, or the essay. Lord Dunsany has never restricted his pen, and although his new book is innocent enough on the face of it, even the jacket requires a second look.

A high regard for the amenities is apparent from the respectful handling of Dean Spanley. The degree of profundity which attaches to his utterances is indeterminable. The inferential undercurrents of his Delphic words may leave some at a loss. From the days when Pythagoras propounded the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, it has afforded infinite speculation on the individual consequences and pre-sequences thereof. It is Lord Dunsany's preoccupation "as a scientific writer" with this belief which leads him to the discovery of Dean Spanley's secret—"a secret which might justify the hope of the East and astound Europe." The difficulty of the task was enhanced by the fact that the object of the investigation was not only a Dean, but a Dean who belonged to a Club. Hence it was that the research into his canine past required all the blandishments of the author-host's quiet little dinner parties, all the conversational innuendoes of that bibulous conspirator Wrather, and *all* the bottles of the Maharajah's Imperial Tokay. 'Tis then and only then that the recidivistic Dean recaptures the exhilaration of the hunt, the flavour of old bones, the bite of fleas, and a strong feeling about the moon. One might make the mistake of asking why Lord Dunsany chose a Dean as the present incarnation of his real hero, Wag: but then, that *would* be a mistake. The important thing for any thinking reader to do is to distinguish where the Dean leaves off, and where the dog begins. An end is put to the investigation—and a final end it is—when the Dean is made a Bishop.

In unsealing the cautiously closed lips of Dean Spanley, it was the author's purpose to avoid that uninteresting state of affairs, a reasonable frame of mind. It is wise to be on one's guard in perusing these *Talks*. . . Whatever the original significance of Shakespeare's conundrum, "miching mallecho," these words possess certain onomatopoeic properties that suggest Lord Dunsany's humour. Certain it is that his new book is one instance where the tale wags the dog.

MARY COGAN BROMAGE

"CANDLE FOR THE PROUD." By Francis MacManus. (*Talbot Press*. 5s.).

A novel of 18th century Ireland, which would have been hailed great had it come when our renaissance was straining to bridge the century of surrender. But perhaps we flatter ourselves that this work of the renaissance, in which Daniel Corkery's *The Hidden Ireland* played such a vital part has penetrated farther than surface erudition; in which case this book of Francis MacManus has an importance above entertainment in Ireland to-day. His Donnacha Ruadh MacConmara is out of Greek tragedy, fellow with Oedipus, overshadowed by fate inexorable, and omnipresent to the audience, whether the victim blaspheme or stand heroically confronting it. He is poet, playboy, rebel and spailpeen. In despair he is souper, reactionary, scoffer.

Francis MacManus has tackled an immense frieze, in heroic design, with few and clear cut figures. In doing so, he has to some extent cut himself off from modern novel writing, minutely-designed tapestry by comparison. Characterisation is subordinate to the tragic design, and also to the fact that he is dealing with semi-historical characters.

The book is well written, strong, sustained, over-shrouded in gloom perhaps. But, who has touched 18th century Gaelic Ireland and not found his pen palled with horror at man's inhumanity to man.

The author has a full, vigorous, clear-cut style, lacking in subtlety, but sure in the application of broad tones, in fact a style eminently suitable to his purpose.

Carleton, a Northern and almost contemporary with it, does not give that life. In the North the learning of tradition had died by his time. His poor scholar seeks the Latin and the Greek from such a master as Donnacha Ruadh. Edgeworth, looking from the Big House Window was not aware of it. It is hidden in the smoky background of Lever's picaresque novels.

I cannot help thinking, in spite of Mr. Frank O'Connor, that there was an affinity of culture between 18th century Gaelic Ireland and the 18th century of Swift and Pope and Dryden. In both there is emphasis on the science and craftsmanship of letters. For both the classical is the touchstone. In this present book the strange friendship between Donnacha Ruadh and the Rev. Peter Grimshaw has such a basis.

*Candle for the Proud* is the second volume of a trilogy of which *Stand and Give Challenge* is the first, but it is none the less a complete novel in itself.

I would give it to the young. I would give it also to those dazzled by the exotic glories of the 18th century colony.

EDWARD DE COURCEY

(We regret that on the completion of our first half year, the services of Mr. O Faolain are not available for renewal. Fortunately, however, we are able to promise his continued co-operation in the matter of reviews, which, from his pen, have always been highly appreciated by our readers.—The Editor.)

\* We direct our readers' attention to the opening in January of a very limited space for the discussion of views which have appeared in our pages.

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## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT (16 OCT.—15 NOV.)

Bills to fix agricultural wages and to benefit 10,000 more widows and orphans introduced. At Fianna Fail party annual Ard-Fheis Pres. de Valera outlined his new Constitution for the Saorstát "to last when border is removed," and stated that besides political problems there were big social problems that must be solved. Shocking details of slums at Dublin Inquiry. Housing Committee of Dublin Corporation refuse to join Committee formed as result of the newspaper campaign against slums. Speaker at Protestant Synod suggested 70s. as living wage and stated no such figure being paid in Dublin. The Rioghacht, lay Catholic radical movement, called for inquiry into drift of rural population into towns. St. Vincent de Paul Society reported distribution of £25,000 a year to Dublin poor. Ballaghaderreen priest stated "dole" was the demoralising and un-Irish child of bureaucracy. Stated that estates being divided at rate of 20,000 acres a year. Several important warnings against the dangers to Irish youth emigrating to Britain. After long agitation pensions granted to Connaught Rangers who mutinied in India in 1920. Chairman of Old I.R.A. stated operation of Pensions Act was an insult. T. Henderson, Independent Unionist M.P., suspended in Northern Parliament. Northern Nationalist, decided not to take part in Coronation celebrations. Publication of memoirs by Sir As Chamberlain disclosed Tory activities in army and court against Home Rule in 1914. Protest at Fermanagh Council against use of Ulster in title of Tourist association. New Lord Mayor of Manchester proposes to visit Dublin as peace move in economic war. Announced at first annual conference of Cumann Poblachta that there were 81 branches. Gaelic League called for news in Irish from Radio Athlone. Professor Michael Tierney strongly criticised methods of teaching Irish. At Dublin meeting children indignantly deny in Irish that they spoke in English on scholarship holiday in Gaeltacht.

Hospitals Sweepstakes draw on Cambridgeshire showed Proceeds £2,706,000. Tourist Association reported record figures for visitors from home and abroad. Wanton destruction of public property costing Dublin £1,000 a year showed no decrease.

Government decreed cheaper bread for Dublin and other cities. London Secretary of Engineering Union stated wages and conditions in the industry in Saorstát set headline for British workers. Strike of sugar workers at Mallow spread to other factories; Union ban on importation of sugar into Cork lifted; Thurles workers march back singing "Soldier's Song"; Mass in Thurles Cathedral for success of factory; strike finally settled on personal intervention of Minister Sean Lemass, who resumed duty after long illness. Fall in adverse trade balance with £2,000,000 increase over last year to date in exports from Saorstát. Master bakers form guild. Edward Bohane retired on pension from Directorship of R.D.S. Reported that Ernest Blythe retiring from politics and entering commercial life. Gale swept over Ireland and Dublin tugs went to assistance of American liner. Annual Ulster Art exhibition in Belfast. Exhibition in Dublin of pictures by Hercules Brabazon. Albert Power, lecturing to Academy of Christian Art, stated Irish limestone was a good substitute for marble. Friends of National Collection held reception in Dublin Municipal Art Gallery. Professor Walter Gropius lectured to the Architectural Association and Abbe Dimnet to the R.D.S. Professor Rishworth, new President of Civil Engineers, hoped trees would be planted at the proposed reservoir for water and electricity at Poula-pouca. Peter Conroy lectured on Kilmainham Priory to Old Dublin Society.

The great interest in the Spanish civil war continued, Irish College at Salamanca being closed, students were admitted to Maynooth. Irish Christian Front held big all-Ireland meeting in College Green, and its President, Deputy Patrick Belton, travelled to Spain to arrange for transport of medical supplies. Deputy Frank McDermott, in speeches which attracted much attention, while considering that the insurrection was justified, warned the Irish people against being rused into anti-democratic measures, and referred to the indifference about recent murders in Ireland. British Government made representations to Burgos Government on behalf of two Belfast members of ambulance brigade captured by insurgents. Young Cork member of O'Duffy's Corporate Party joins Italian Fascist army. In heavy rain 2,000 Dublin ex-servicemen attended Armistice commemoration; it was noted that Union Jacks as such were not displayed, and the British national anthem was not generally sung; in Belfast the commemoration was attended by the Governor-General and the Government. Sir Bernard Pares lecturing to R.D.S. on Russia, referred to McCullagh, McGowan and Dillon, three Irishmen who had left their mark on Russian history. Michael MacWhite, Saorstát Minister at Washington, stated at New York Feis that he returned from Ireland full of hope for her future. In reply to criticisms, Minister Tomas O Deirg stated that new Shannon airport was owned, controlled and paid for by Saorstát Government.

DENIS BARRY



## NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

DR. JAMES DEVANE *pursues his investigations into our cultural problems.*

J. O. BARTLEY, M.A. (Q.U.B.), *writing from Bombay University, brings a classical mind to bear on the question of modern poetry and tempted us to illustrate it with the anthology published in this issue.*

MAIRIN MITCHELL, *well-known author-journalist, sends us this informative account of her observations during a Scandinavian tour.*

BRIAN COFFEY, M.SC., PH.D., *combined with his Paris studies a zealous practice in the new modes of poetic expression. Joint author with Denis Devlin of a challenging book of poems.*

DENIS DEVLIN, M.A., *to whom poetry offers a welcome retreat from foreign affairs. Readers would do well to overcome the "difficulty" that may characterise their present approach to his writings.*

DONAGH MACDONAGH, B.A., B.L., *is already a familiar name in our pages.*

MAIRE COTTER *sends from Cork this worthy trifle.*

BRIAN MCCRUDDEN, *a young Belfast poet of very high academic attainments who adopts a modern form to convey his frankly revolutionary message.*

AN GOBAN SAOR, *conceals the identity of a well-known student of economics who already has published Economics for Ourselves.*

FRANK O'CONNOR *gives us a short story that is worthy to inherit the praise earned by Guests of the Nation and Bones of Contention.*

EDWARD A. MCGUIRE, B.A. (T.C.D.), *though best known in sports circles, is a disarming art critic and a serious student, as well as collector, of pastel work; Irish correspondent of The Studio.*

THOMAS MCGREEVY *served on Editorial Staff of The Connoisseur (London) and Formes (Paris); translator of Paul Valery's monograph on Leonardo da Vinci.*

JOHN O'GORMAN, B.A.RCH., F.R.I.A.I., *takes to task many of the older architects who seem to miss the inwardness of Modern Architecture.*

DENIS BARRY, B.COMM., *Tailtean Novel prize-winner, again contributes this valuable review of the month's happenings.*

The regular features are conducted by the Editors of the several sections :

Foreign Commentary	..	OWEN S. SKEFFINGTON, M.A., D.PH.
Art .. ..	..	JOHN DOWLING, B.A., B.D.S.
Music .. ..	..	EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR
Theatre .. ..	..	SEAN O MEADHRA
Film .. ..	..	LIAM O LAOGHAIRE
Books .. ..	..	EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A.

We find ourselves without room to stocktake at the close of 1936—we must defer it now until the opening of the New Year. We have happily surmounted many difficulties since our opening number and we hope to make a brave entry with our second volume into greater things. To our subscribers, contributors and advertisers, we convey the heartiest thanks of the whole Editorial Committee and management for their support, which we look forward to in redoubled measure during the coming year.

*Corrigendum.* In the same breath as we referred to the brilliant qualities of Mr. R. C. Geary's mathematics, we let him down rather badly in the last number (p. 21, l. 24), where we referred to a fall of from 28.2 to 22 as a reduction of 10 per cent. The error, for which we take full responsibility, occurred owing to a confusion at the proof stage, the correct version being, of course, 22.8 to 22. Again (on p. 23, l. 7), the word decrease should read increase. We owe it both to our readers and to Mr. Geary to correct these regrettable blunders and in view of the value of his contribution, we suggest to librarians and any readers who may be binding their copies, to incorporate the corrections straightaway in the November number.

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